

STARBLAZER

SPACE FICTION ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 151

22p

A giant bio-computer controlled the galaxy and its prime aim was . . .

EXTINCTION EARTH!

STARBLAZER

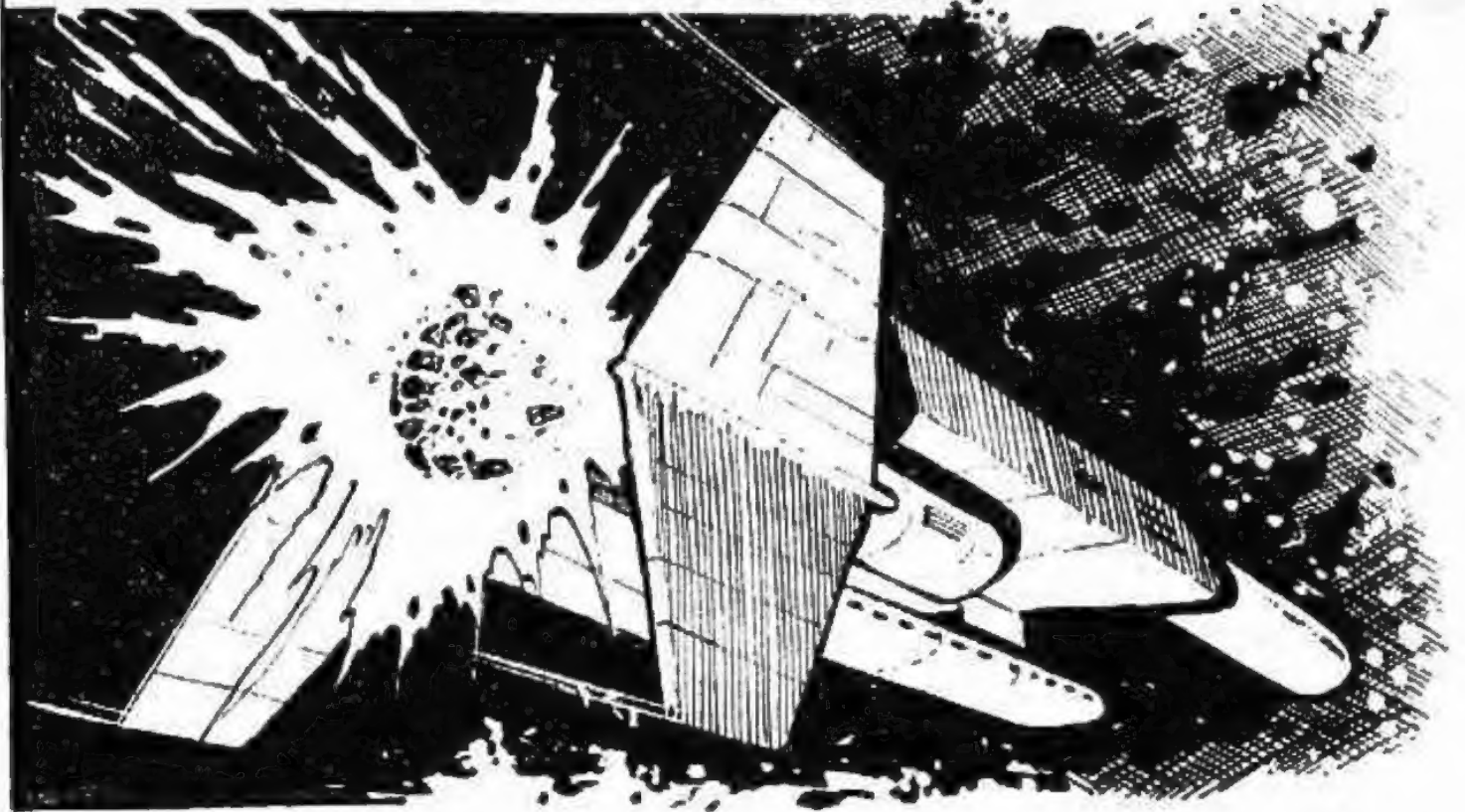
THERE WERE MANY DIFFERENT RACES, INCLUDING TERRANS, IN THE SPIRAL SECTION OF THE GALAXY. TO BRING PERMANENT PEACE THEY HAD FORMED A SUPREME COUNCIL FROM MEMBERS OF THE VARIOUS PLANETS. THE COUNCIL HAD ORDERED THE CONSTRUCTION OF A MOON-SIZED BIO-COMPUTER, CALLED THE MINDER, AND GAVE IT FULL POWER TO RULE OVER THEIR PEOPLES. IN TURN THE MINDER HAD CREATED A ROBOTIC FORCE, THE JUSTICES, WHOSE SOLE TASK WAS TO POLICE THE GALAXY. BUT THE JUSTICES HAD ONE AIM—

EXTINCTION EARTH!

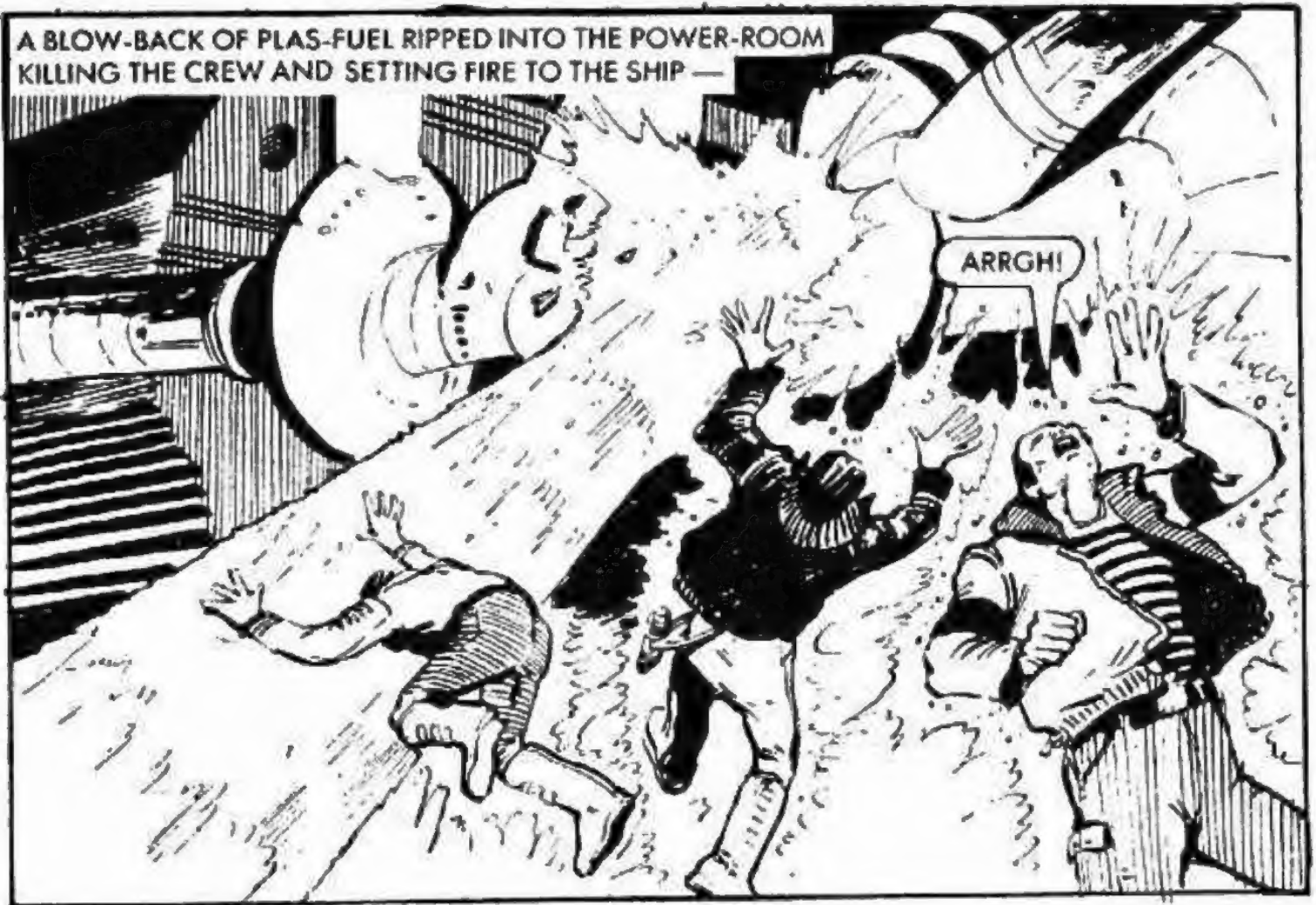


TROUBLE WAS BREWING IN THE GALAXY —
A TROUBLE THE CREW OF THE FREIGHTER,
NIMBUS, WERE UNAWARE OF . . . THEY
WERE ABOUT TO HAVE THEIR OWN CRISIS!

WITHOUT WARNING THE NUMBER ONE ENGINE FLARED OUT.

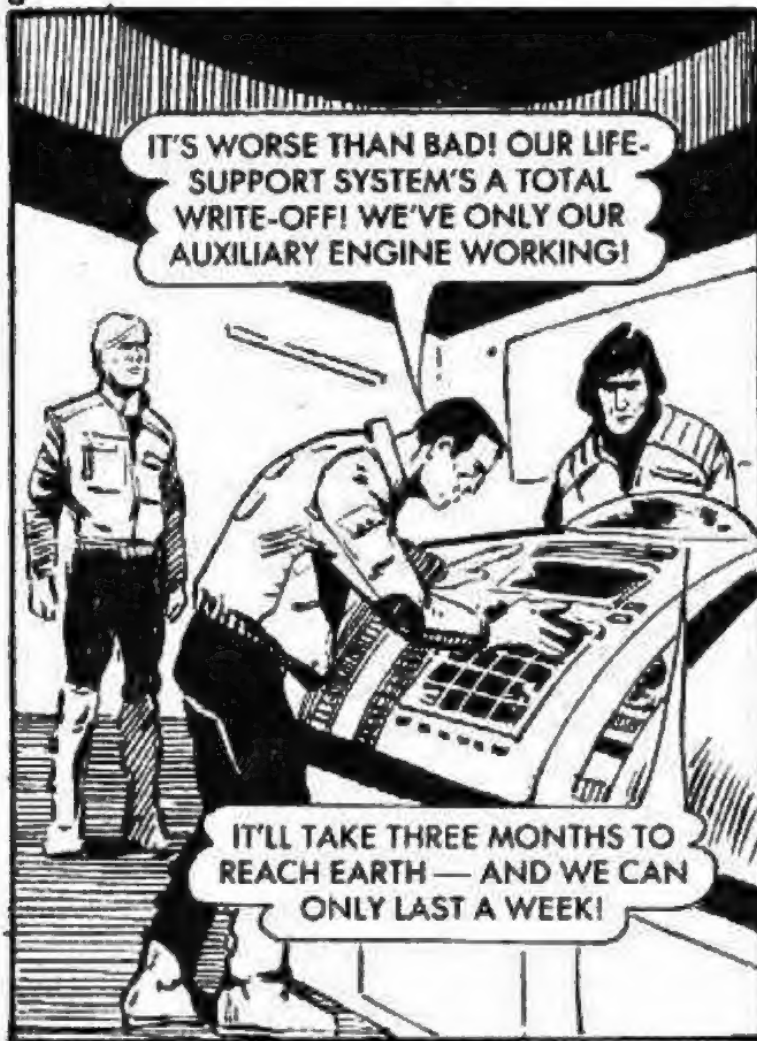


A BLOW-BACK OF PLAS-FUEL RIPPED INTO THE POWER-ROOM
KILLING THE CREW AND SETTING FIRE TO THE SHIP —

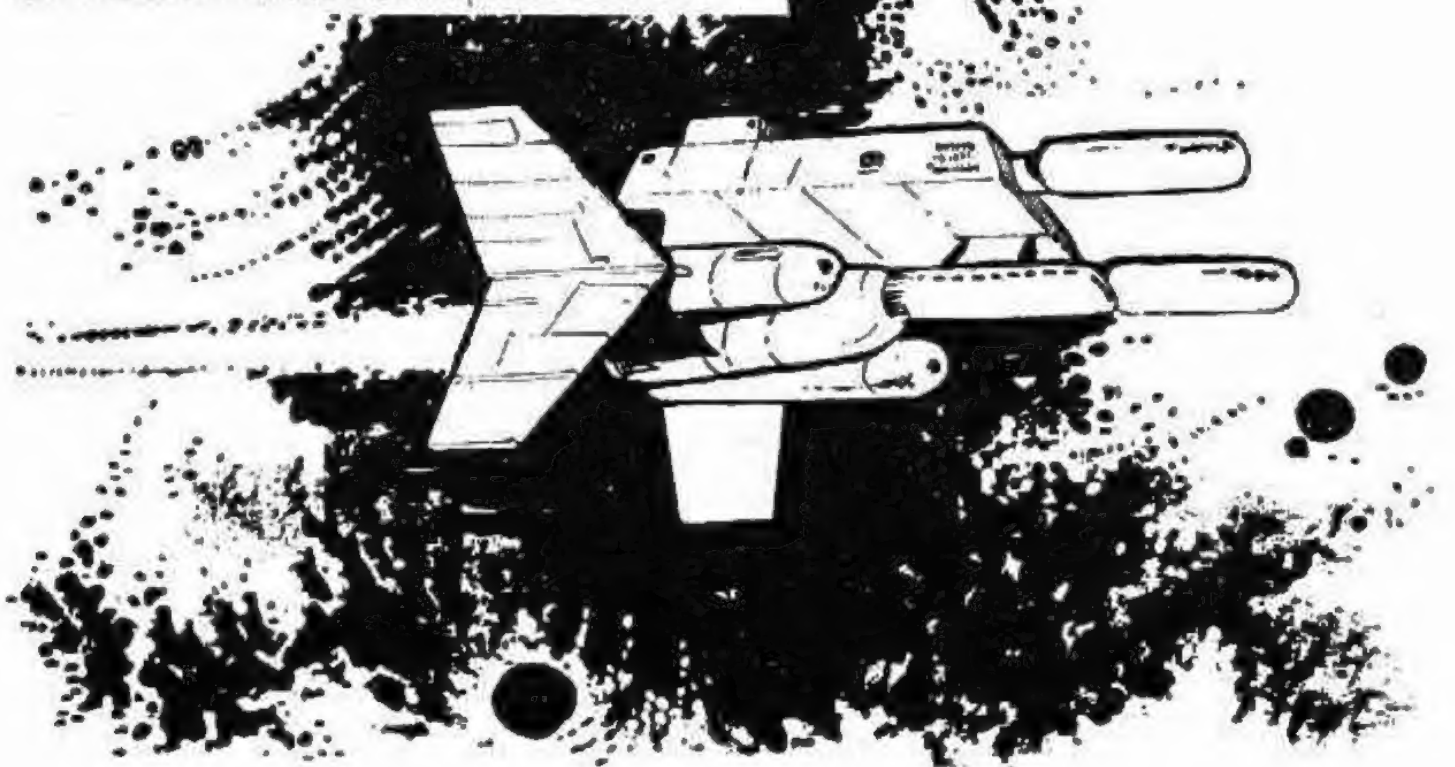


WHEN AT LAST THE FIRE WAS BROUGHT UNDER CONTROL THERE WERE ONLY THREE SURVIVORS.





THE CRYOBINS KEPT THEM IN SUSPENDED ANIMATION ON THE SLOW THREE MONTH JOURNEY TO EARTH.



THREE MONTHS LATER THEY REVIVED IN TIME TO SEE EARTH SHIPS SPEEDING TOWARDS THEM.

WE MADE IT!
THERE'S GOOD OLD EARTH!

YEAH! AND THAT LOOKS LIKE
A RECEPTION COMMITTEE.

BUT —

HELL'S FANGS! THEY'VE BEEN
VAPED BY JUSTICE SHIPS!

ONE'S JETTISONED AN ESCAPE
POD!

IT'S FULL OF PEOPLE — GET READY
TO PICK THEM UP!



BUT BEFORE THEY COULD REACH THE POD —

THEY'VE BEEN BLOWN APART! WHAT THE JUVOX
ARE THOSE JUSTICES UP TO?



THEY'RE CALLING
US UP ON VID!

A JUSTICE FLICKERED ON TO THE VIDUNIT —

THIS SPACE ZONE IS A QUARANTINED AREA.
WHAT IS YOUR REASON FOR BEING HERE?

HOW'RE WE MEANT TO KNOW! WE'VE
JUST SPENT THREE MONTHS IN CRYOBINS!

A BOARDING PARTY WILL
CHECK YOUR STATUS.

THE JUSTICES EXAMINED THEIR STORY,
THEN EXPLAINED

EARTH HAS GOT VORGAN PLAGUE!
THERE IS NO KNOWN CURE TO THIS.
OUR INSTRUCTIONS ARE TO LET NO
ONE LEAVE.

IT BROKE OUT ON VORGA TWO YEARS
AGO — AND YOU VAPORISED THE
PLANET!

IT WAS A TASK WE DID NOT WANT. THE
'MINDER' DEVOTED ALL ENERGY TO
DISCOVERING AN ANTIDOTE.

YEAH, YEAH! I KNOW! WHAT ARE YOUR
PLANS FOR US?

YOU MAY GO TO A PLANET OF YOUR
CHOICE. THERE YOU WILL BE INTERNED
WITH ALL THE OTHER OFF-EARTH MEN
UNTIL THE QUARANTINE IS OVER.

THE JUSTICES RETURNED THEIR SHIP.

WHAT'RE WE GOING TO DO?

CONTACT EARTH FOR STARTERS! WE'LL USE THE HOLO-CUBE — THE FUZZ CAN'T TAP INTO OUR TALK!

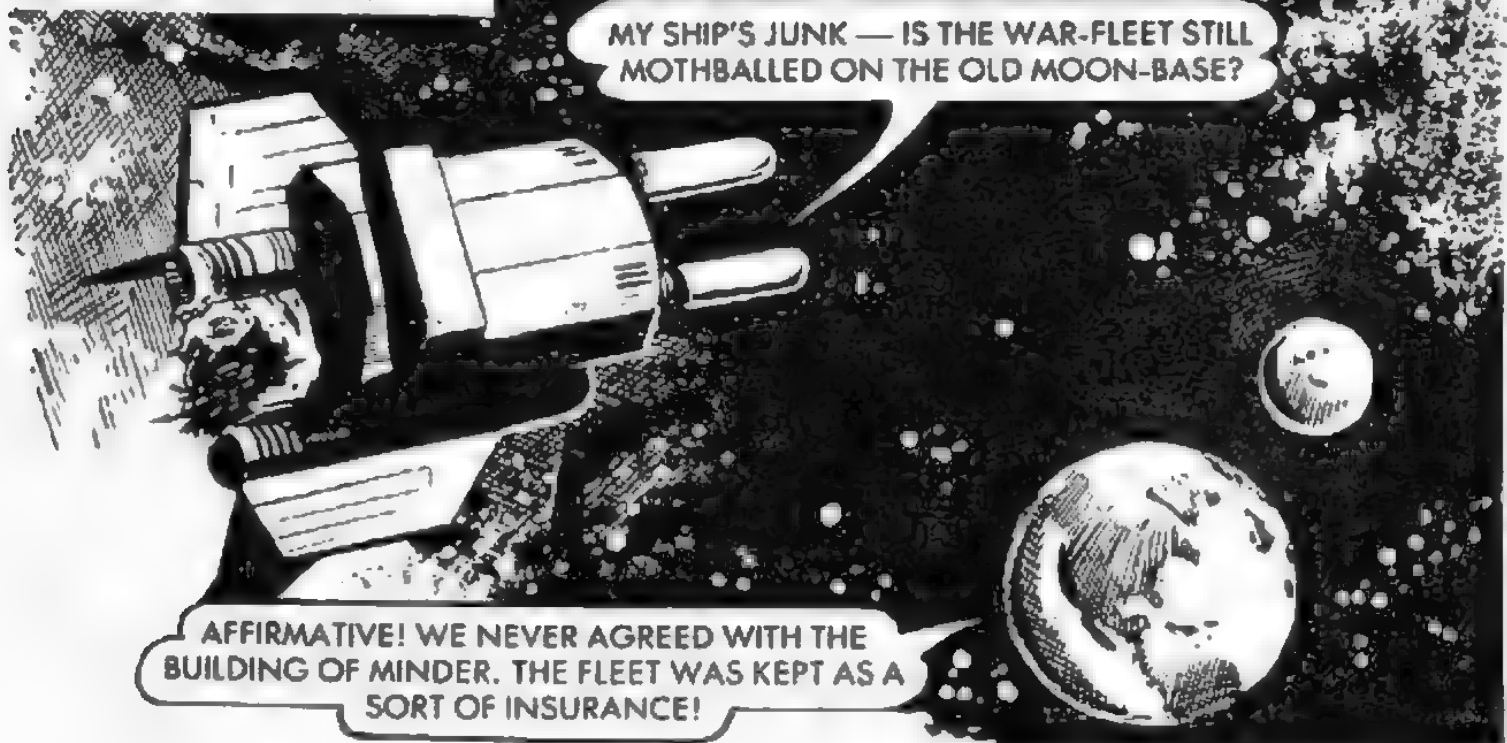
THE HOLO-CUBE TRANSMITTED A 3-D IMAGE OF SCOTT TO THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT ON EARTH.

... AND THERE'S NO CURE IN SIGHT, PRIME LEADER?

NONE! WE SUSPECT THAT THE PLAGUE IS PART OF SOME DEEP PLOT! SOMEONE, SOMEWHERE MUST THEREFORE KNOW THE ANSWER! WE'RE AUTHORISING YOU TO SPEND UNLIMITED MONIES TO FIND THAT SOMEONE!



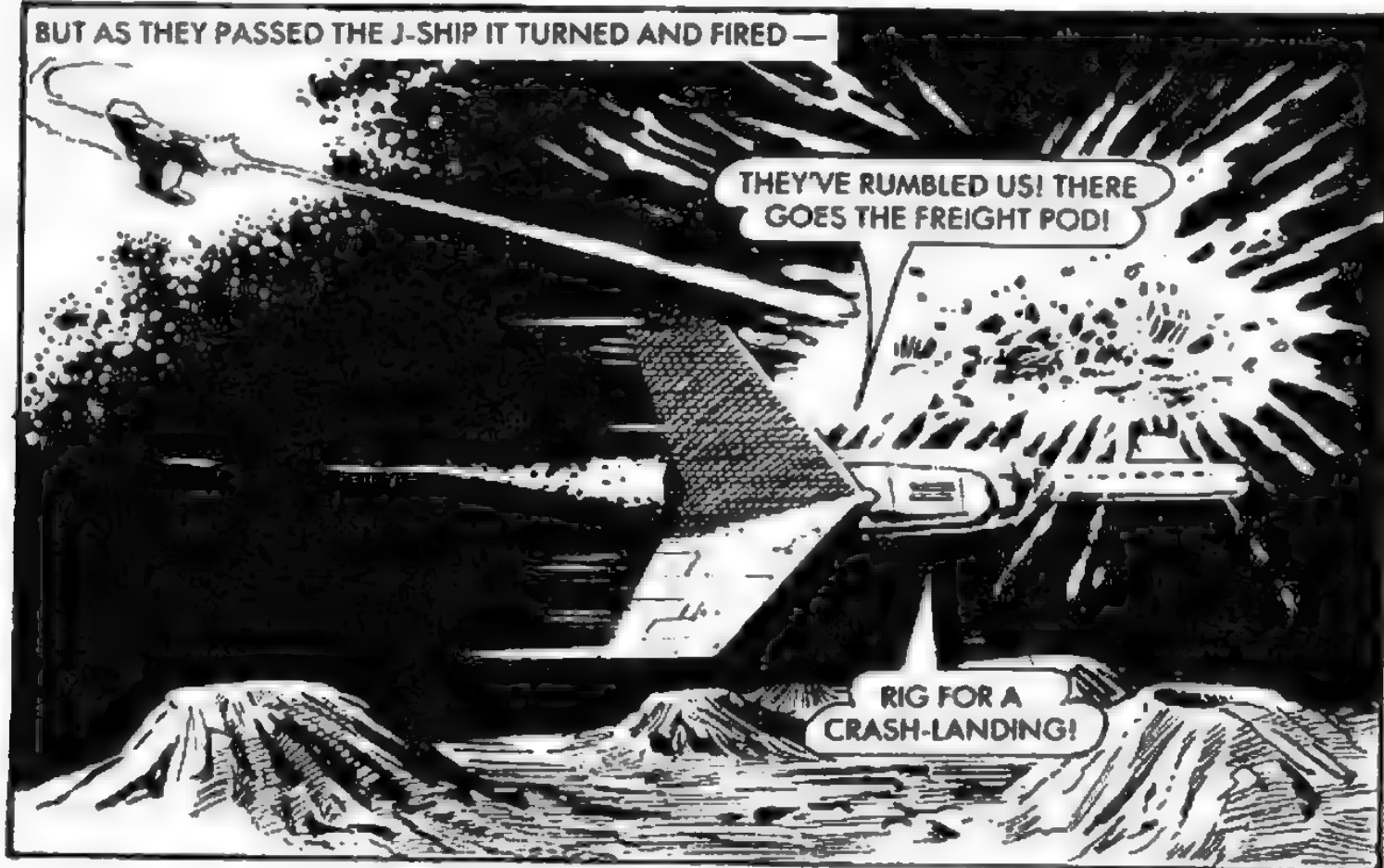
SCOTT AND HIS CREW HEADED
BACK OUT INTO SPACE.



SCOTT ENTERED THE QUARANTINE ZONE AND HEADED TOWARDS THE MOON. AHEAD OF THEM THEY SAW A J-SHIP —



BUT AS THEY PASSED THE J-SHIP IT TURNED AND FIRED —





GRAY-SEATS PROTECTED THEM FROM THE IMPACT, AND —



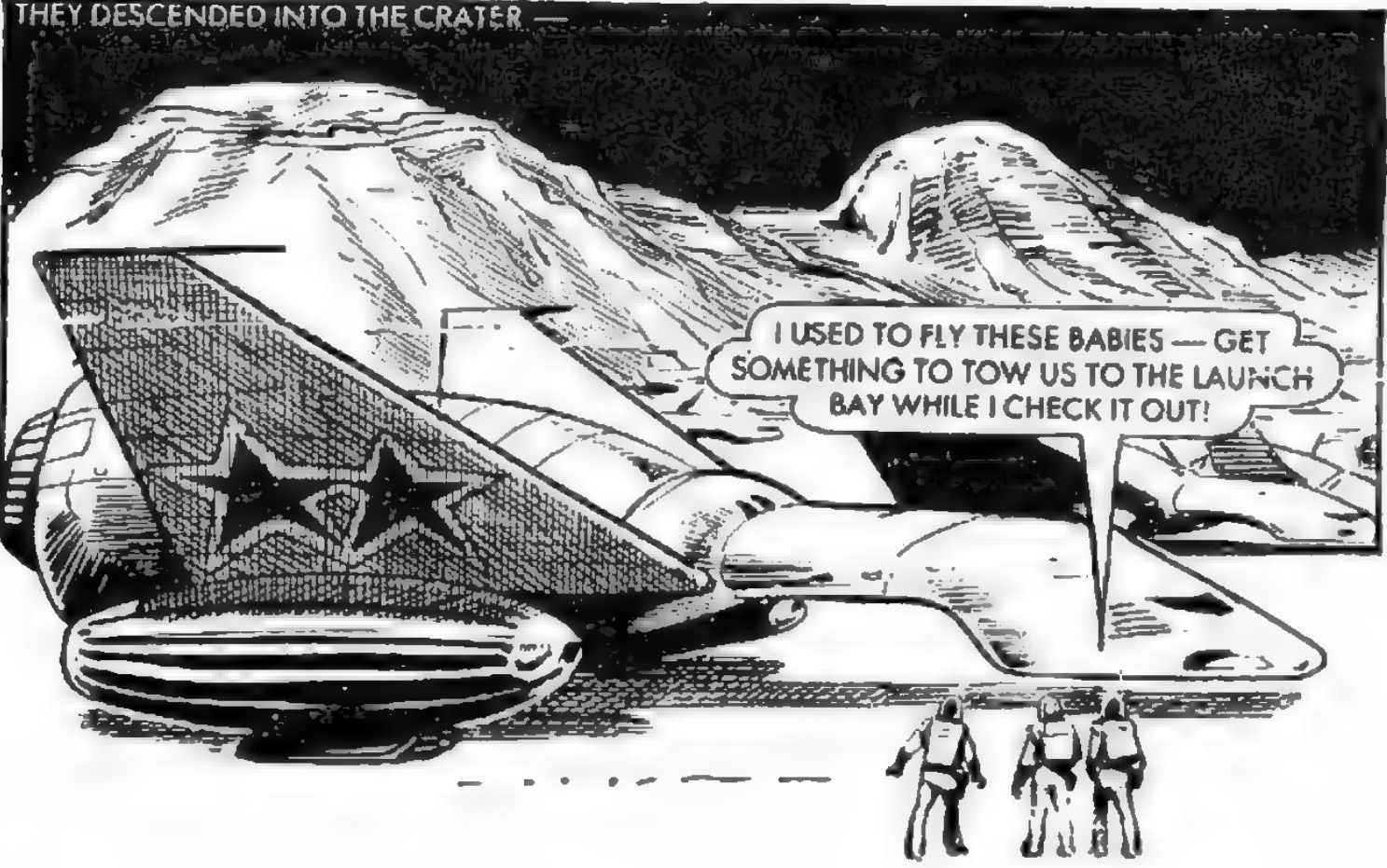
FOUR HOURS RUNNING IN THE LOW GRAVITY FOUND THEM AT THE WAR-FLEET.

A black and white comic panel showing three astronauts in a crater. One astronaut is pointing towards a long line of small, identical spacecraft parked in rows on the left. Two other astronauts stand to the right, looking on. In the background, a large, conical mountain rises. A speech bubble from the pointing astronaut reads: "PHEW! I DIDN'T KNOW WE HAD SO MANY!"

PHEW! I DIDN'T KNOW WE HAD SO MANY!

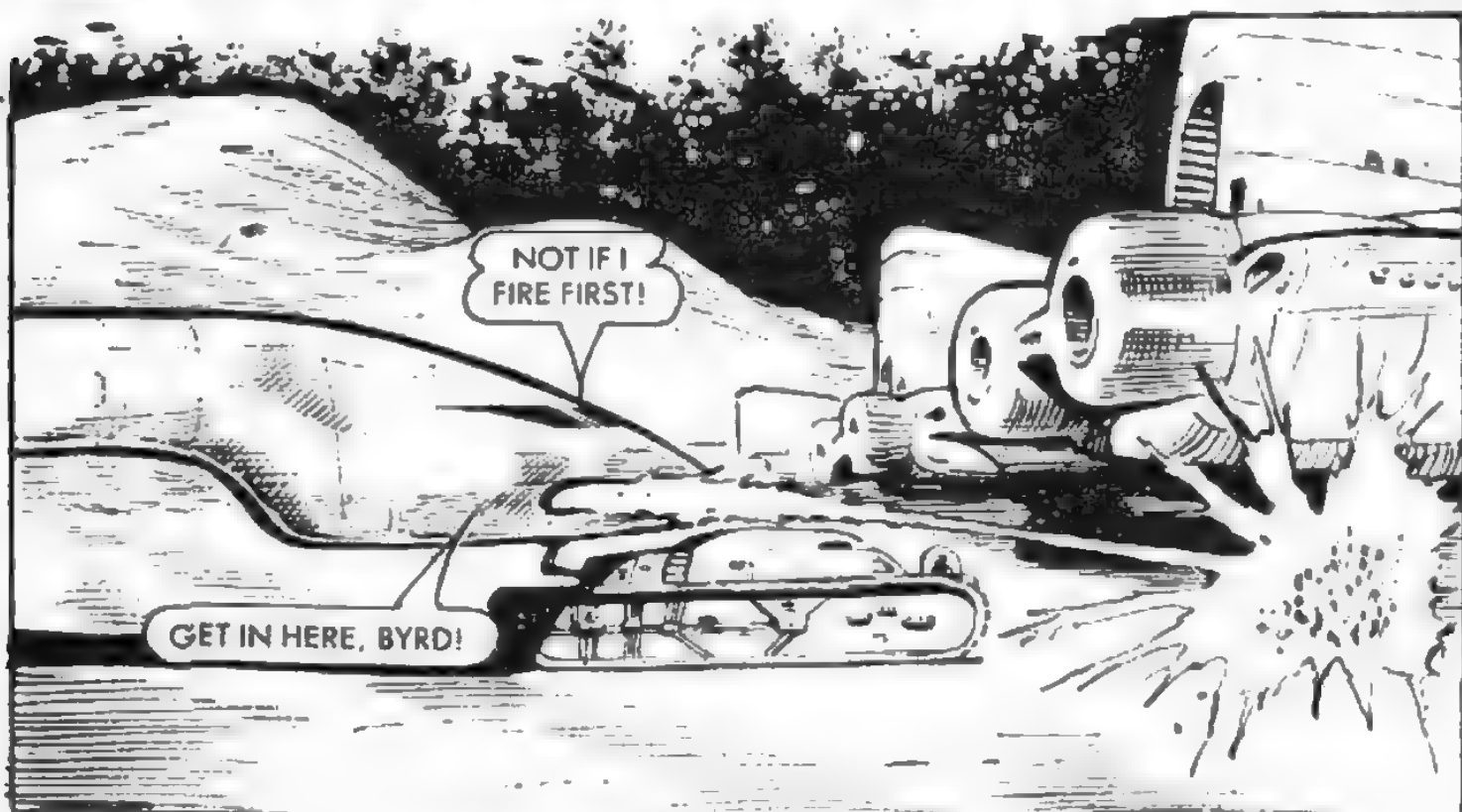
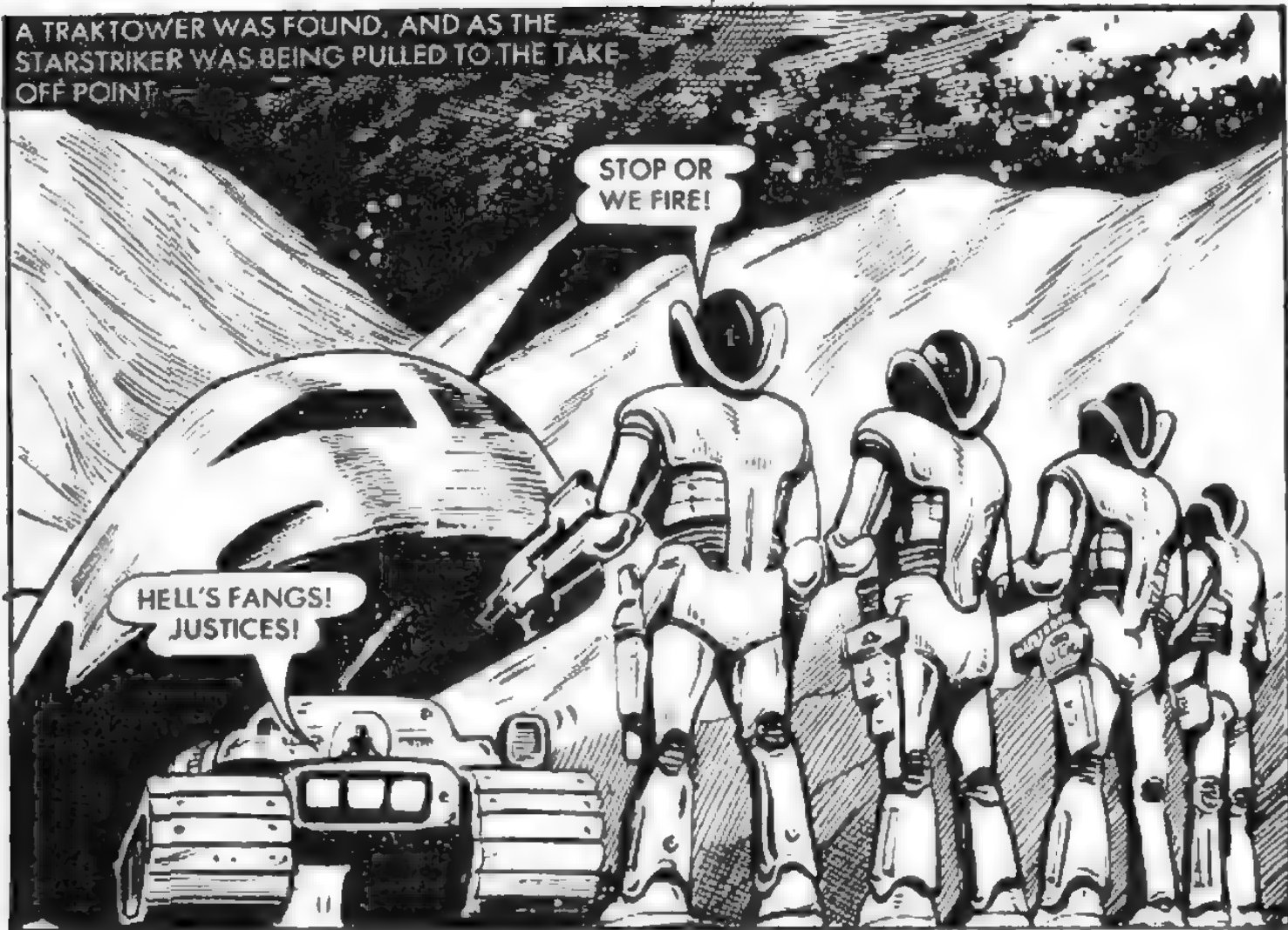
THEY WERE STORED READY FOR ACTION — FUEL, ARMS THE LOT! NO ONE COMES HERE SO THERE'S NO RISK OF CATCHING THE PLAGUE!

THEY DESCENDED INTO THE CRATER —

A black and white comic panel showing three astronauts standing at the bottom of a crater, looking up at a large, crashed spacecraft. The ship is tilted on its side, with its nose pointing towards the left. It has a large, dark, star-shaped emblem on its side. The background shows the rocky walls of the crater. A speech bubble from one of the astronauts reads: "I USED TO FLY THESE BABIES — GET SOMETHING TO TOW US TO THE LAUNCH BAY WHILE I CHECK IT OUT!"

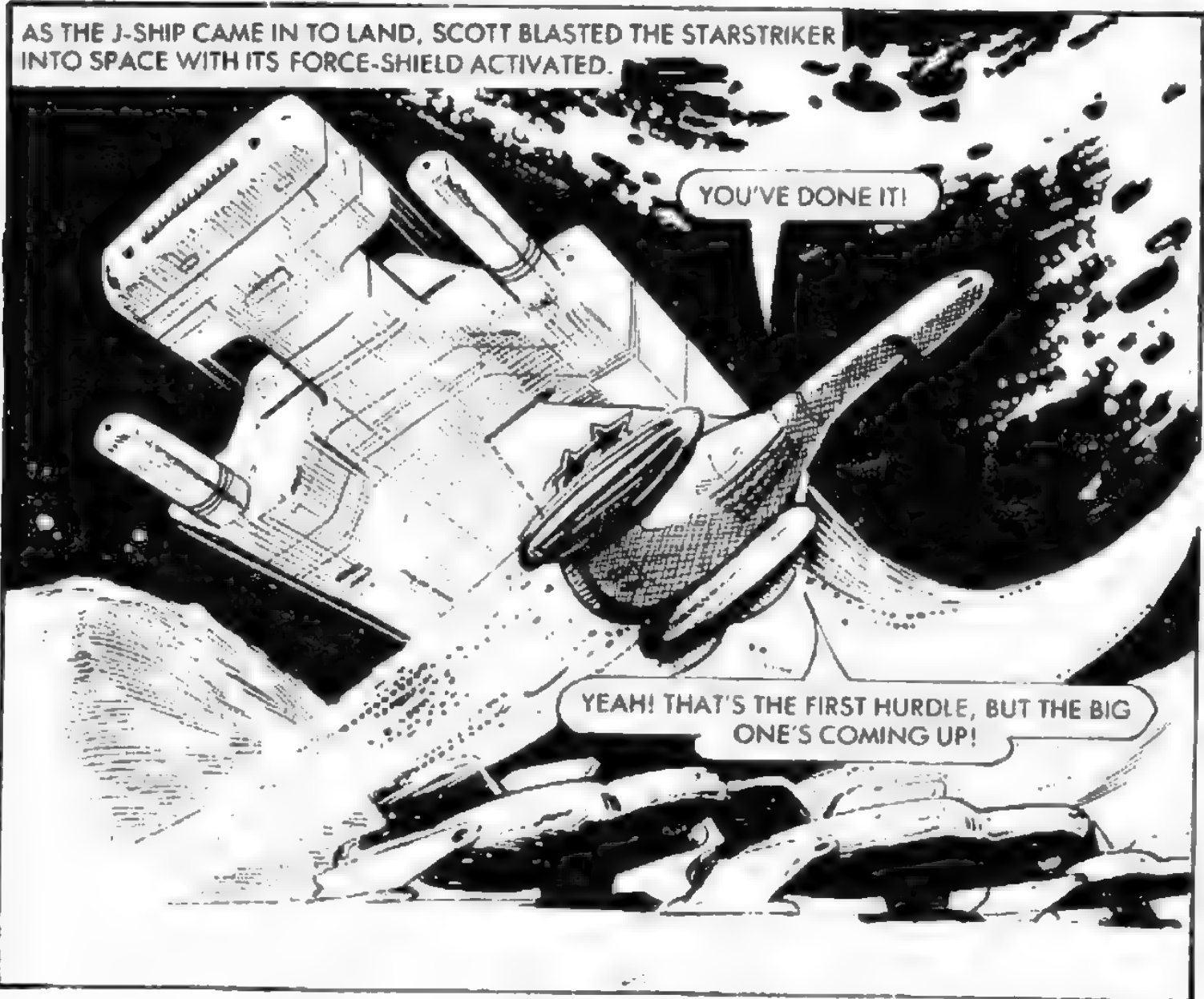
I USED TO FLY THESE BABIES — GET SOMETHING TO TOW US TO THE LAUNCH BAY WHILE I CHECK IT OUT!

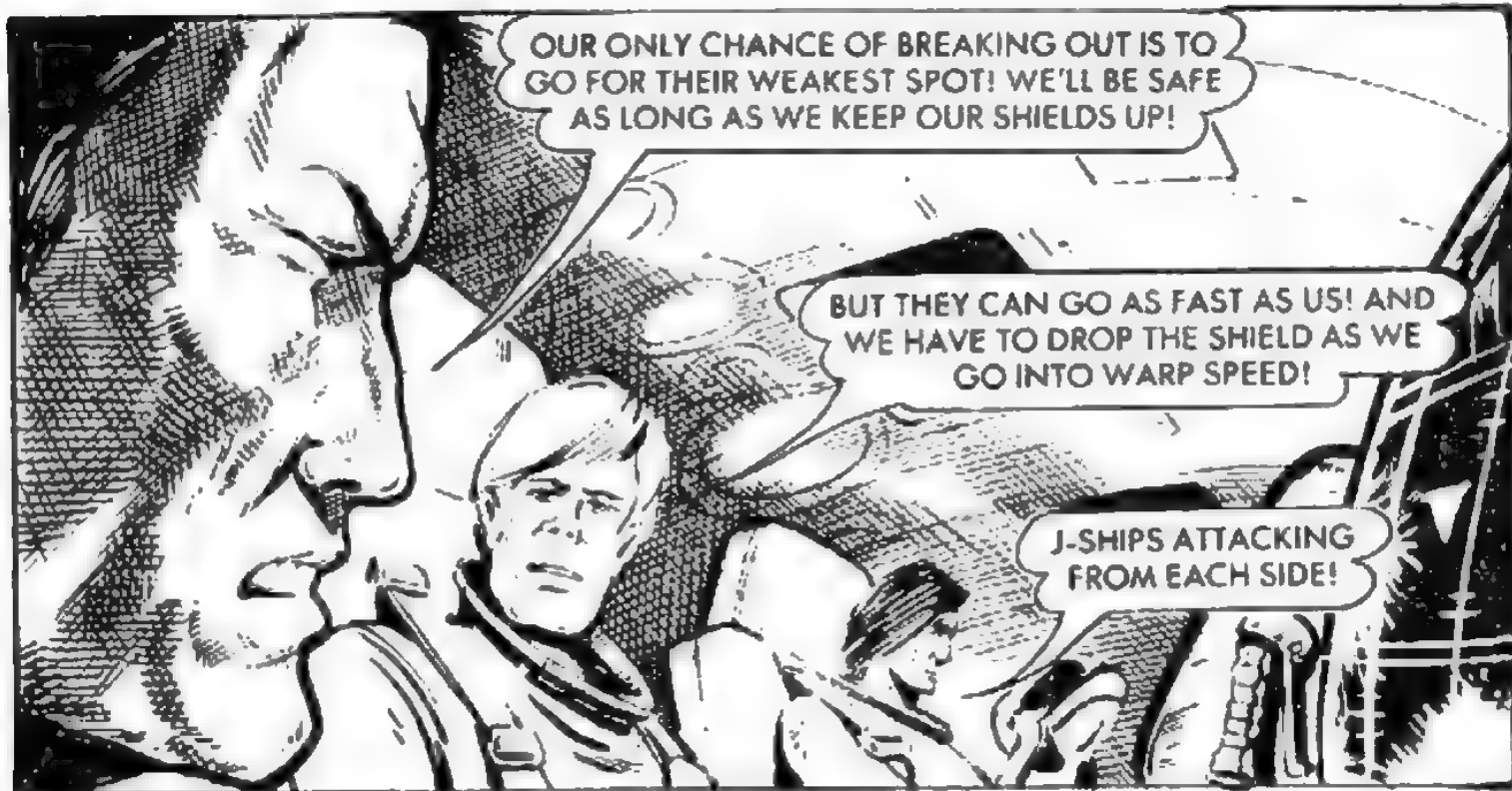
A TRAKTOR WAS FOUND, AND AS THE
STARSTRIKER WAS BEING PULLED TO THE TAKE-
OFF POINT.



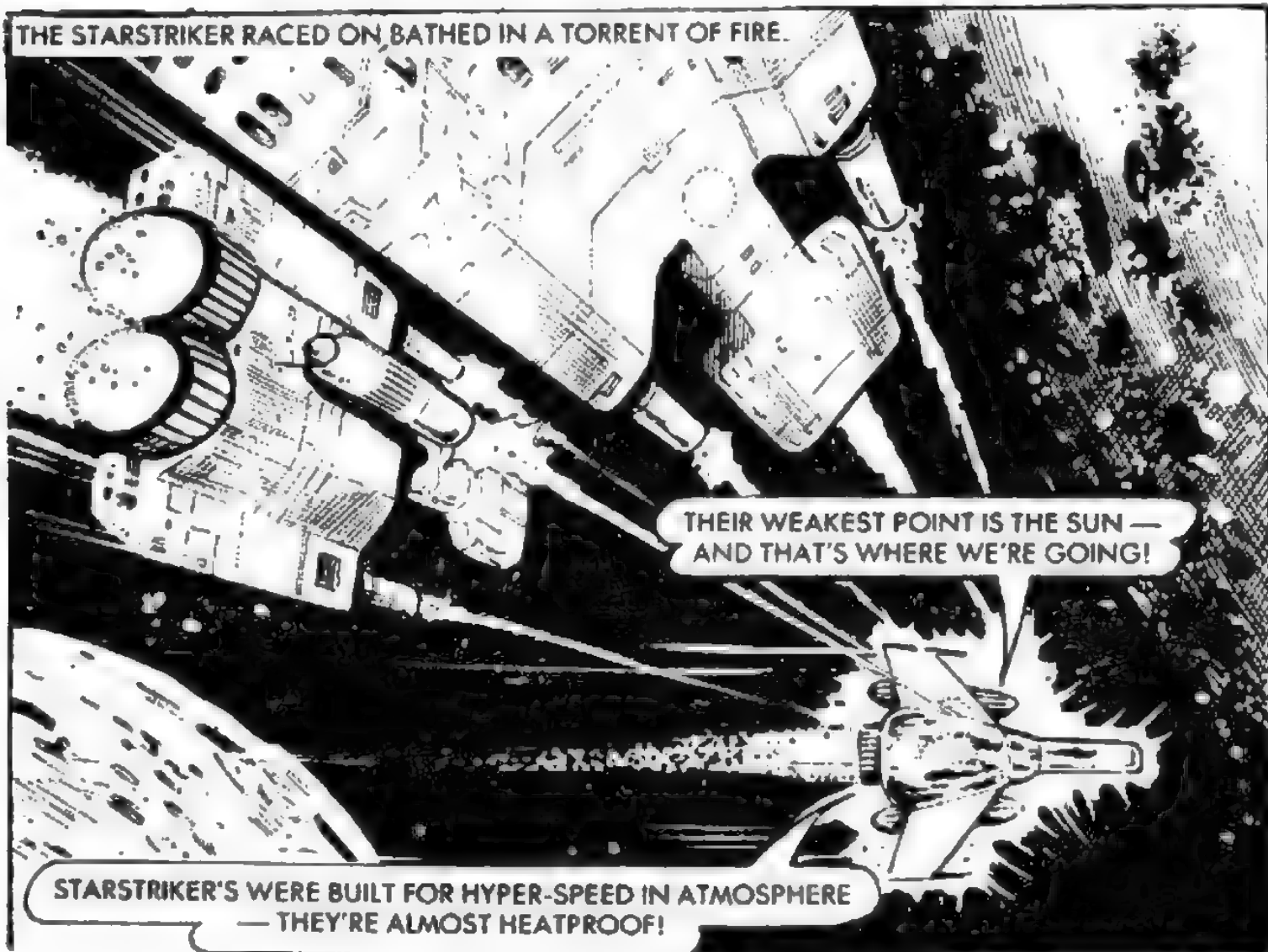


AS THE J-SHIP CAME IN TO LAND, SCOTT BLASTED THE STARSTRIKER INTO SPACE WITH ITS FORCE-SHIELD ACTIVATED.





THE STARSTRIKER RACED ON, BATHED IN A TORRENT OF FIRE.





YOU'RE BETTING THAT THEY
MELT BEFORE WE DO?

YEAH!

STILL FIRING THE J-SHIPS REACHED OVERLOAD, AND DISINTEGRATED —

WE'RE OUT OF THE FRYING PAN —
NOW LET'S GET OUT OF THE FIRE!



THERE'S A HOLO-CALL
FROM EARTH!



WE'VE JUST DISCOVERED THAT THE PLAGUE
VIRUS IS SYNTHETIC! IT'S SIMILAR TO THE
BIO-MASS THAT MINDER IS COMPOSED OF!

THE SCARGANS INVENTED THAT MATERIAL. GO
THERE, CAPTAIN — YOU'LL ALSO FIND THE
SUPREME COUNCIL ON SCARGA!

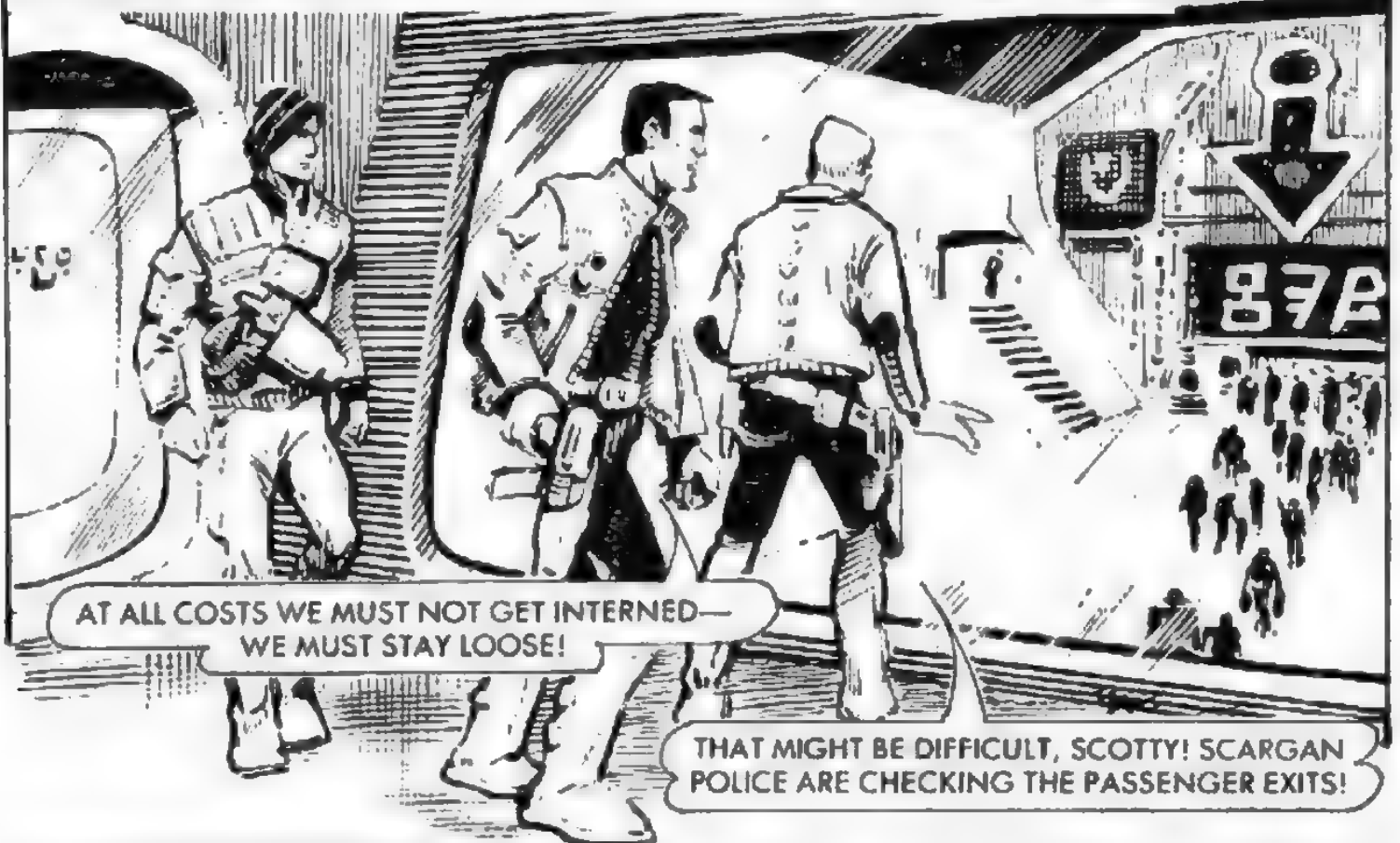
THEY BLURRED INTO WARP JUMP, SAFE FROM PURSUIT.

TEN SPACIALS LATER THEY WERE COASTING TOWARDS AN ORBITING SCARGAN TERMINAL—

WE'LL PARK BETWEEN THOSE SPACE LINERS.
WITH ANY LUCK THEY WON'T KNOW WHO WE
ARE!



TRAVELLERS WERE FERRIED TO THE PLANET IN CAPSULES DOWN A GRAVITY BEAM.

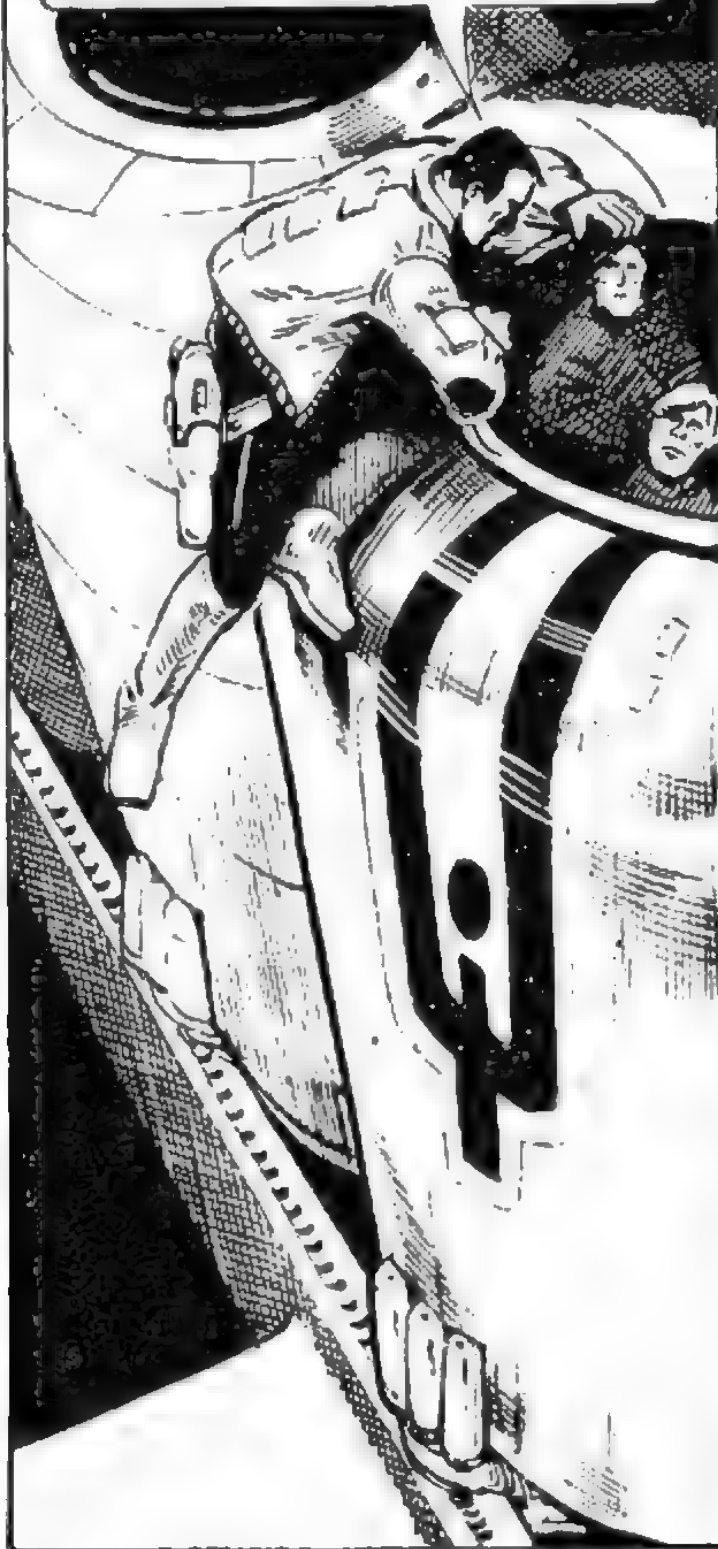


THEY MADE THEIR WAY TO THE FREIGHT SECTION —

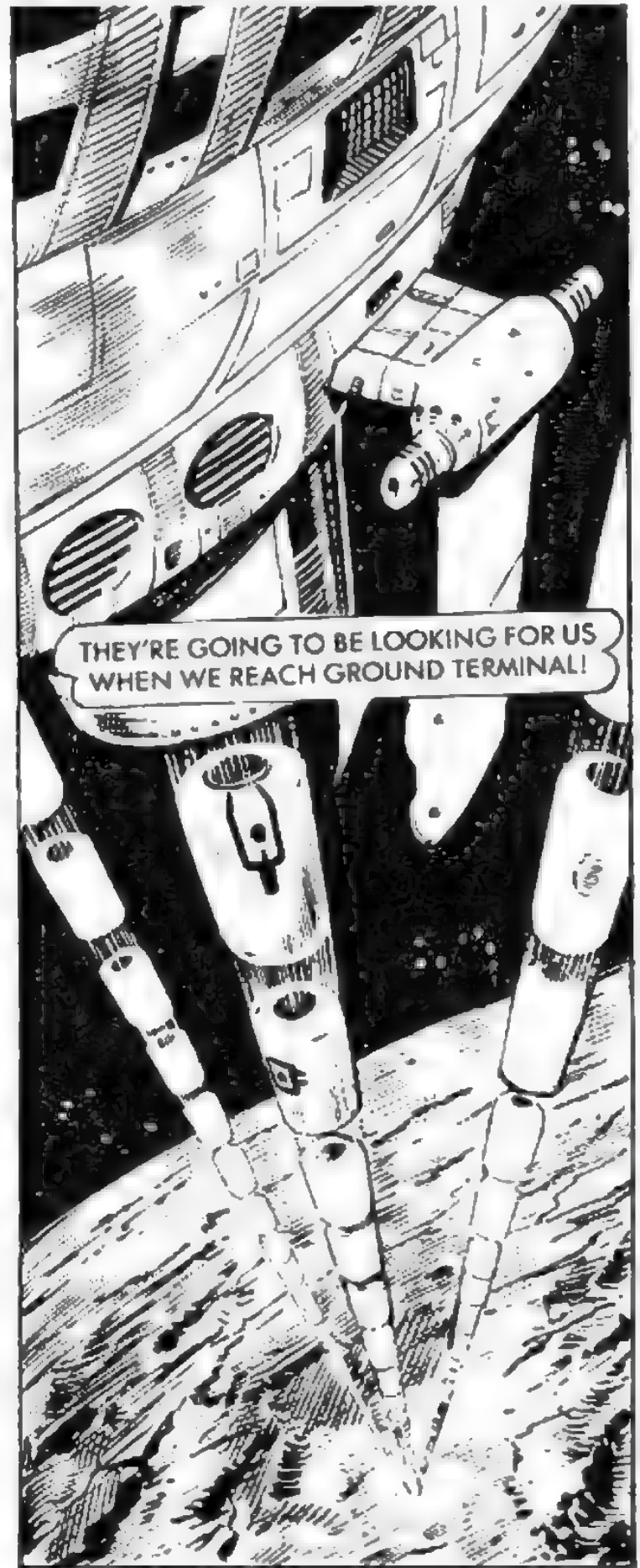


THEY FOUND A PARTLY EMPTY BIN AND CLIMBED IN.

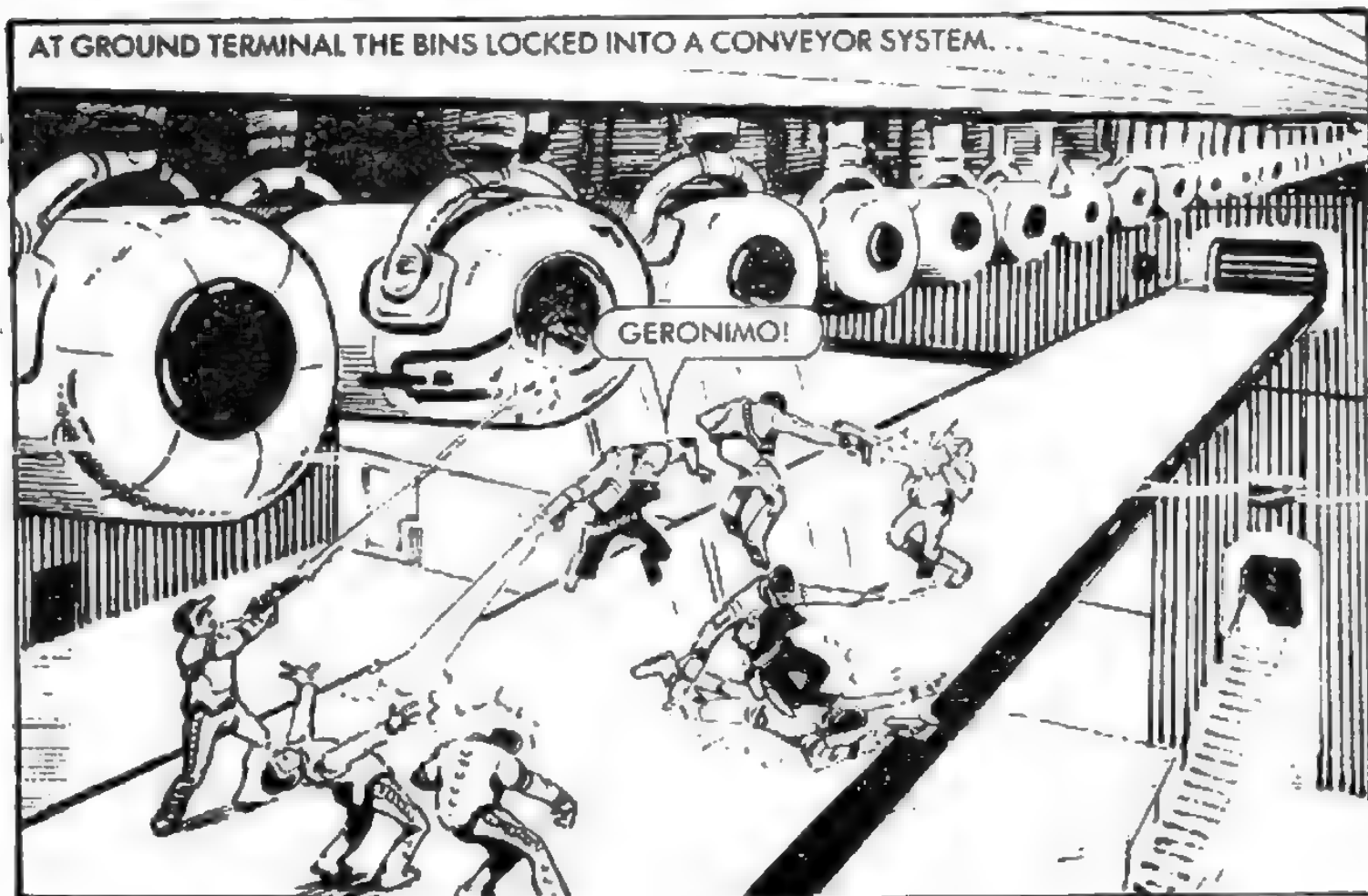
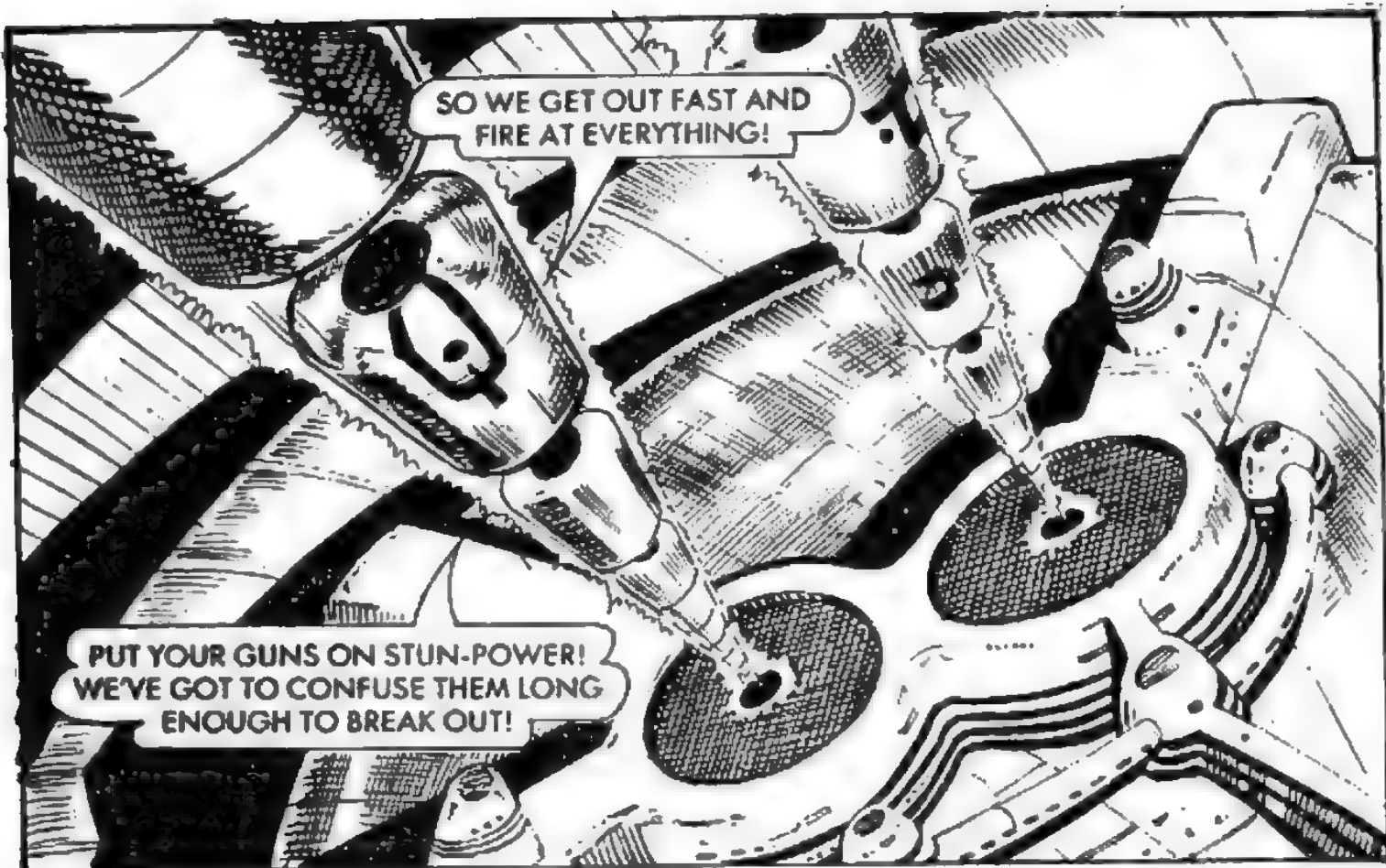
MAKE SURE IT'S SEALED TIGHT—OR THE SPACE VACUUM WILL SPLIT US APART!

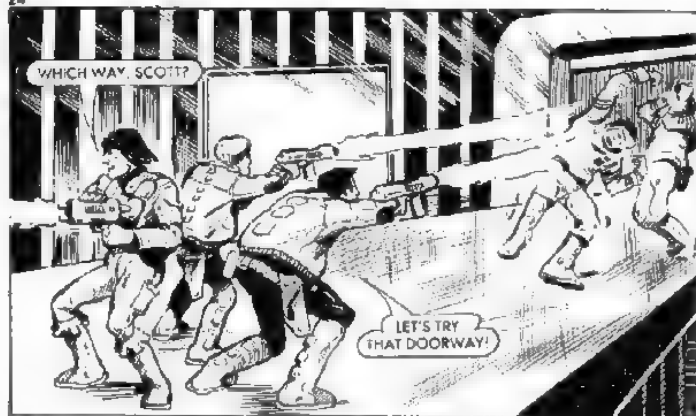


THE FREIGHT BINS FED INTO THE GRAVITY BEAM FOR A CONTROLLED DESCENT TO THE PLANET.

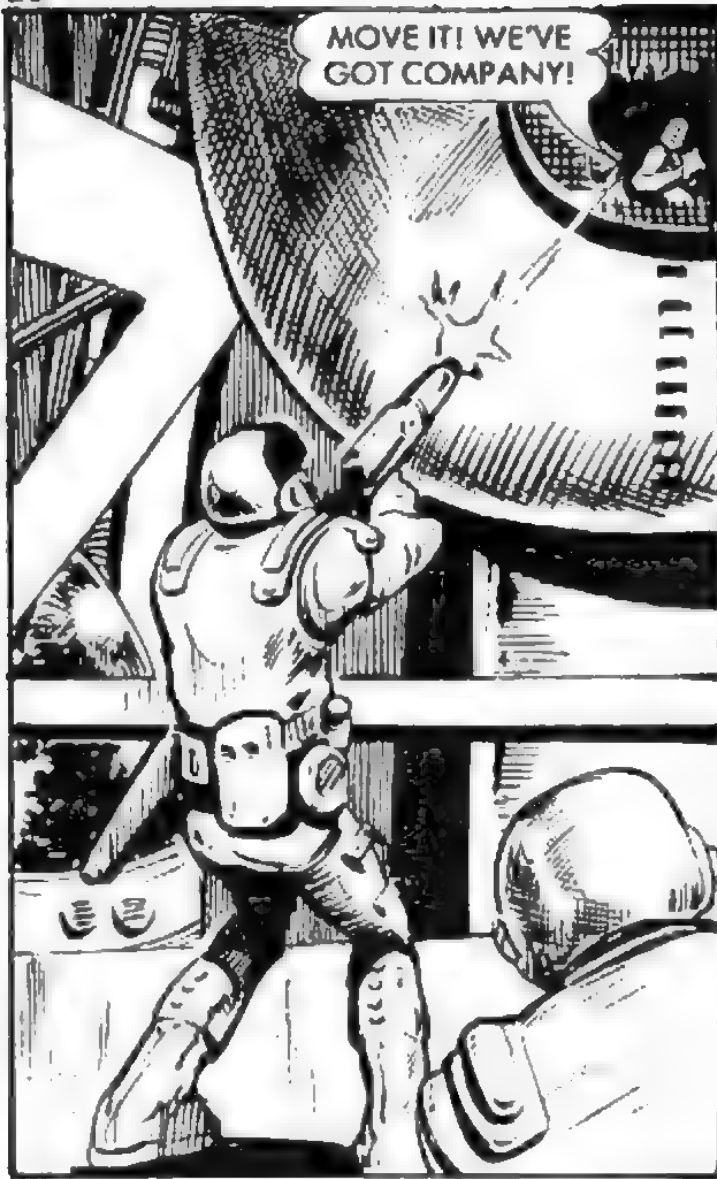


THEY'RE GOING TO BE LOOKING FOR US WHEN WE REACH GROUND TERMINAL!









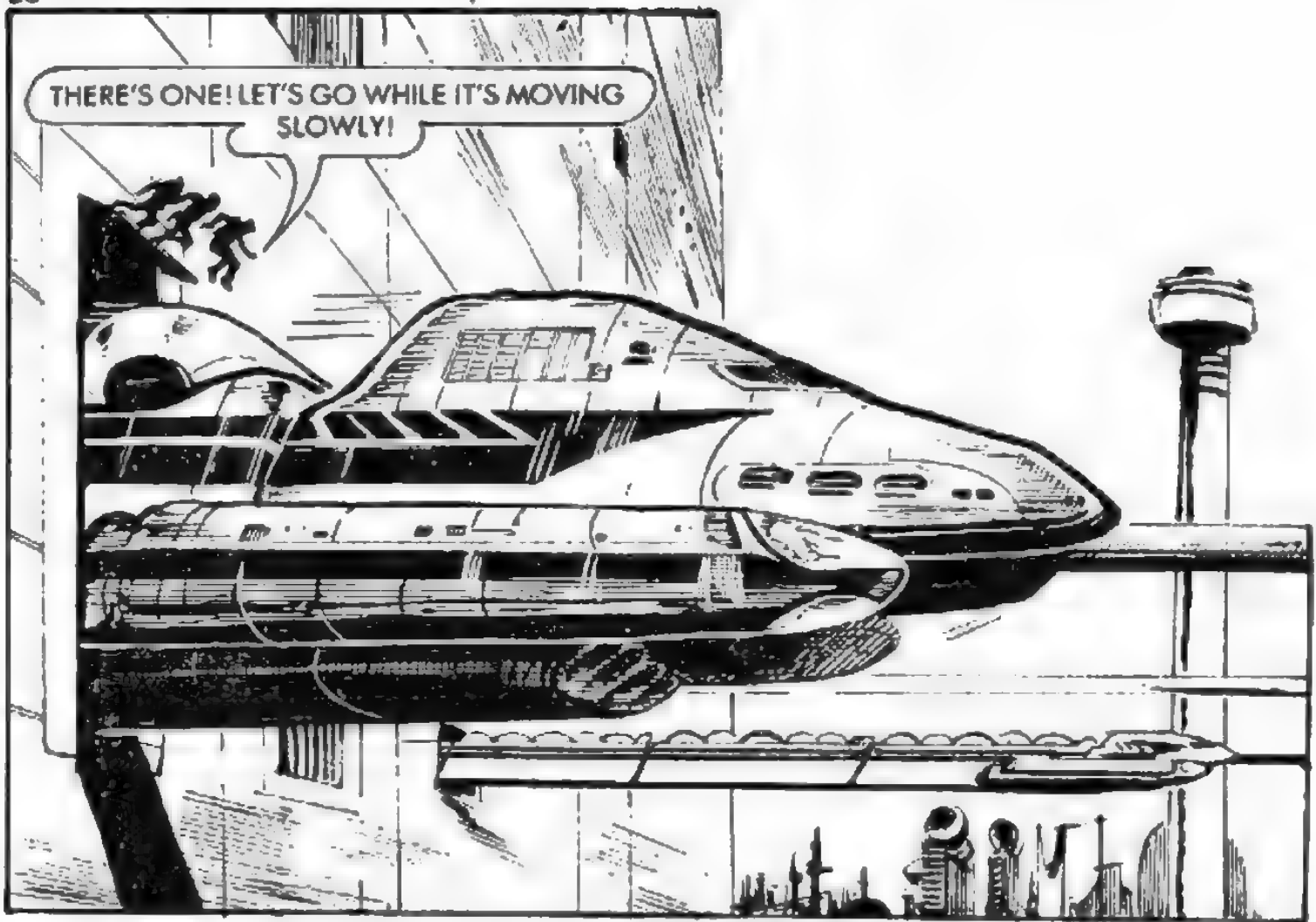
THEY FOUND THEMSELVES OVER A
THOUSAND FOOT DROP.

THE CABLE WON'T
REACH THAT FAR, SCOTT!

I KNOW, BUT IT'LL REACH
THAT FREIGHTER RAIL!

THEY DESCENDED THE CABLE AND
CROUCHED WAITING ON A LEDGE OVER THE
RAIL TUNNEL.

WE WAIT FOR THE NEXT RAIL
FREIGHTER—THEN WE ALL JUMP
TOGETHER!



HIDDEN AMONG THE CONTAINERS, THEY BLURRED ACROSS COUNTRY TOWARDS THE SCARGAN CAPITAL.



AT THE FREIGHT DEPOT THEY LEFT THE RAILER UNNOTICED AND HEADED INTO THE CITY.

I DON'T GET IT, SCOTT! WE MUST BE THE MOST WANTED MEN IN THE GALAXY, YET THERE'S NO ONE LOOKING FOR US HERE!

AND THE JUSTICES SHOULD HAVE FOUND US BY NOW!



THE SCARGANS HAVEN'T TOLD THE JUSTICES! THE MOMENT THEY DO, THE PLANET WILL BE QUARANTINED. THEY'LL JUST KEEP QUIET ABOUT US!

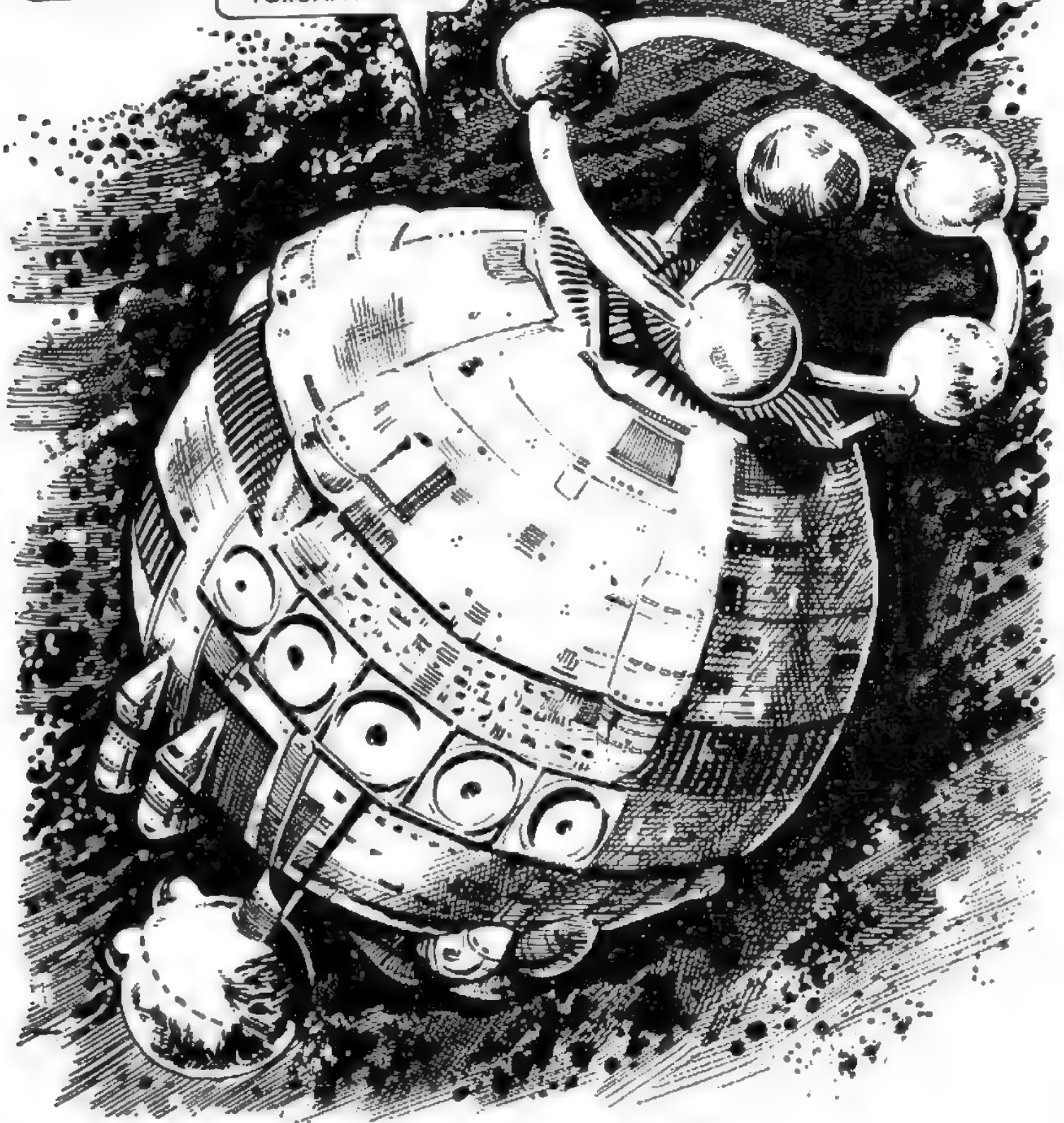
AND THEY'D LIKE US KEPT QUIET PERMANENTLY!

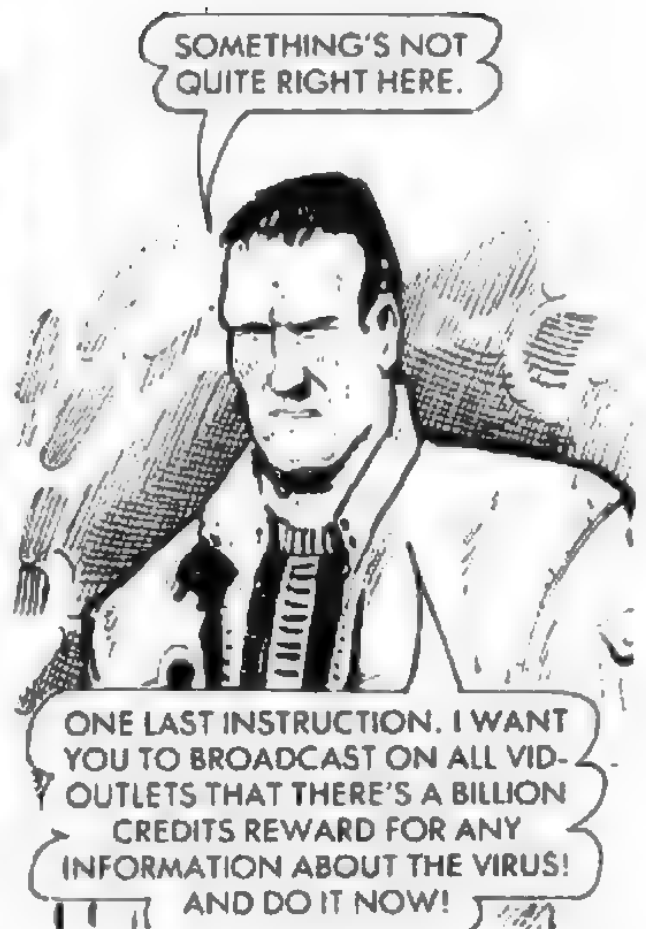




IN ITS DEEP SPACE ORBIT THE GIANT MINDER ANALYSED THE SCARGAN REQUEST.

THE EARTH INFORMATION APPEARS TO BE CORRECT.
HOWEVER, IT HAS NOT AIDED MY INVESTIGATIONS. I
RELUCTANTLY INFORM YOU THAT THERE IS NO CURE TO THE
VORGAN PLAGUE.





THE PUBLIC VID-SCREENS CARRIED SCOTT'S OFFER PLANET-WIDE.



AS THE THREE SPACERS REGROUPED, SCOTT SAW TOO LATE THAT THEY'D BEEN FOLLOWED BY A POLICE HOMING SPYDER—

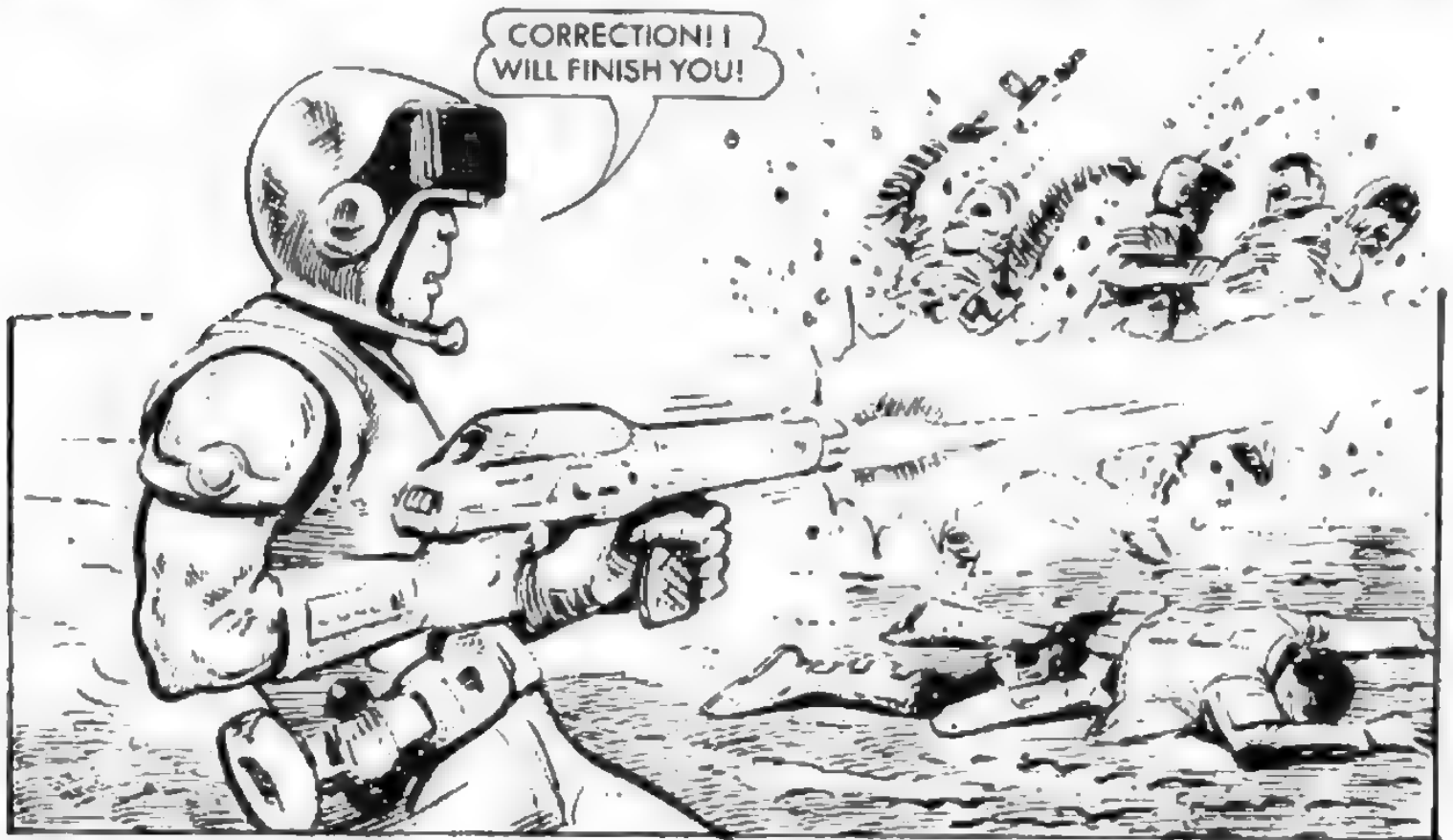
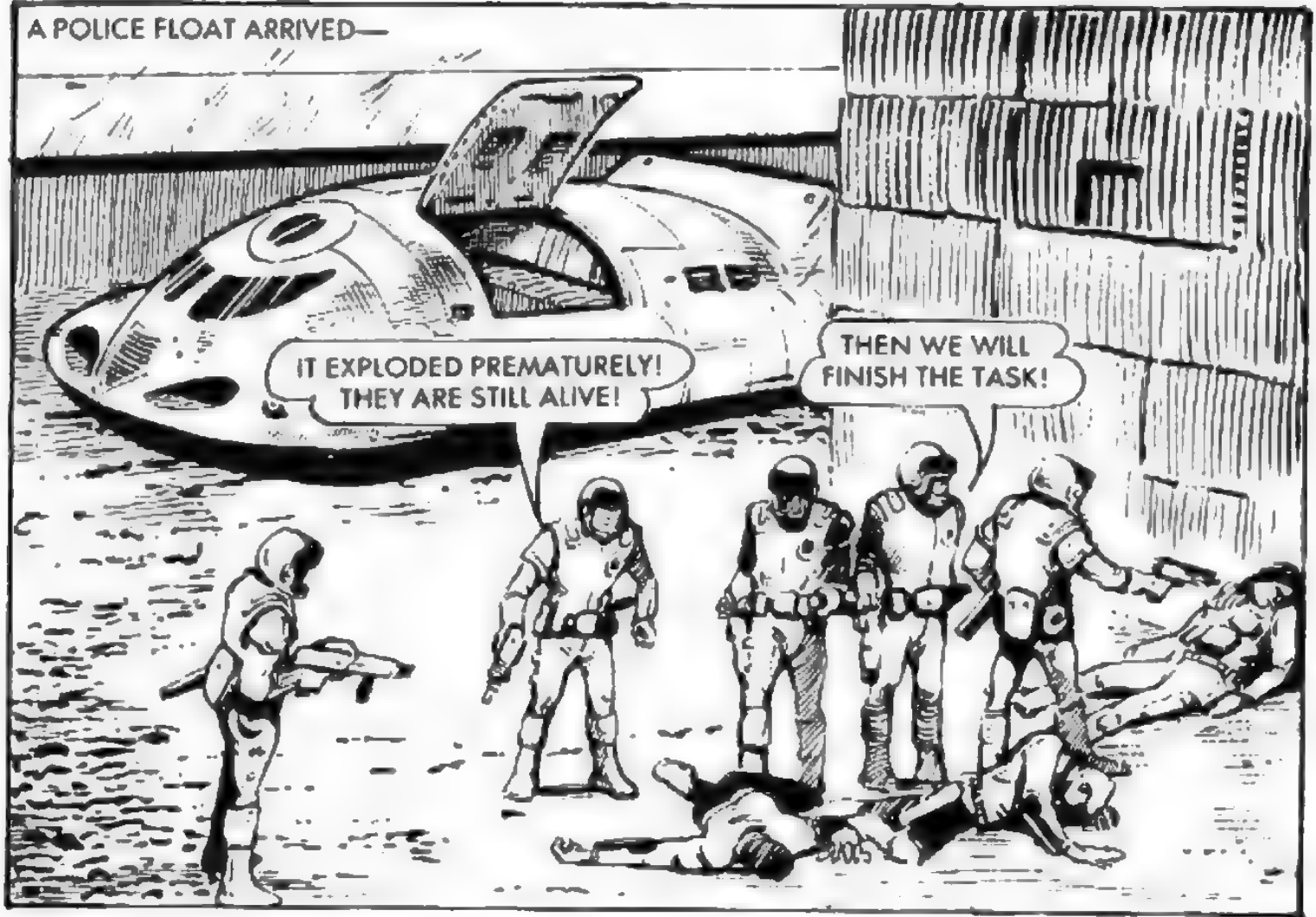
DAMN! GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE IT EXPLODES!

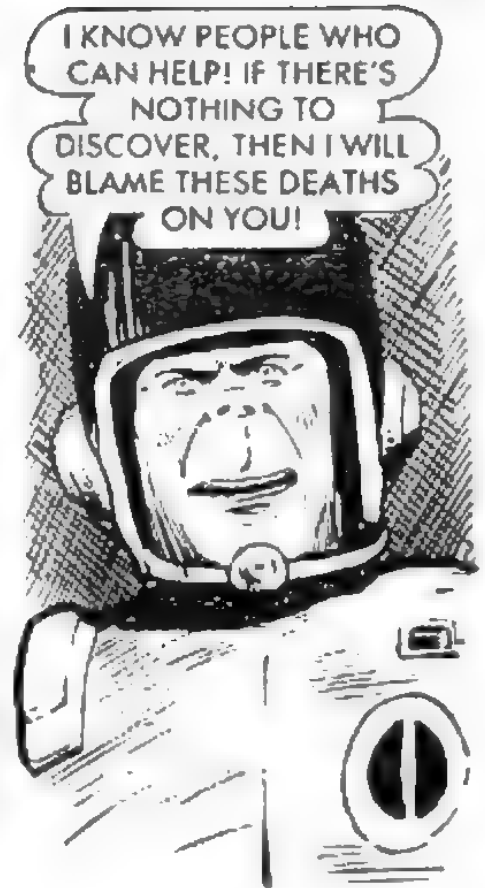
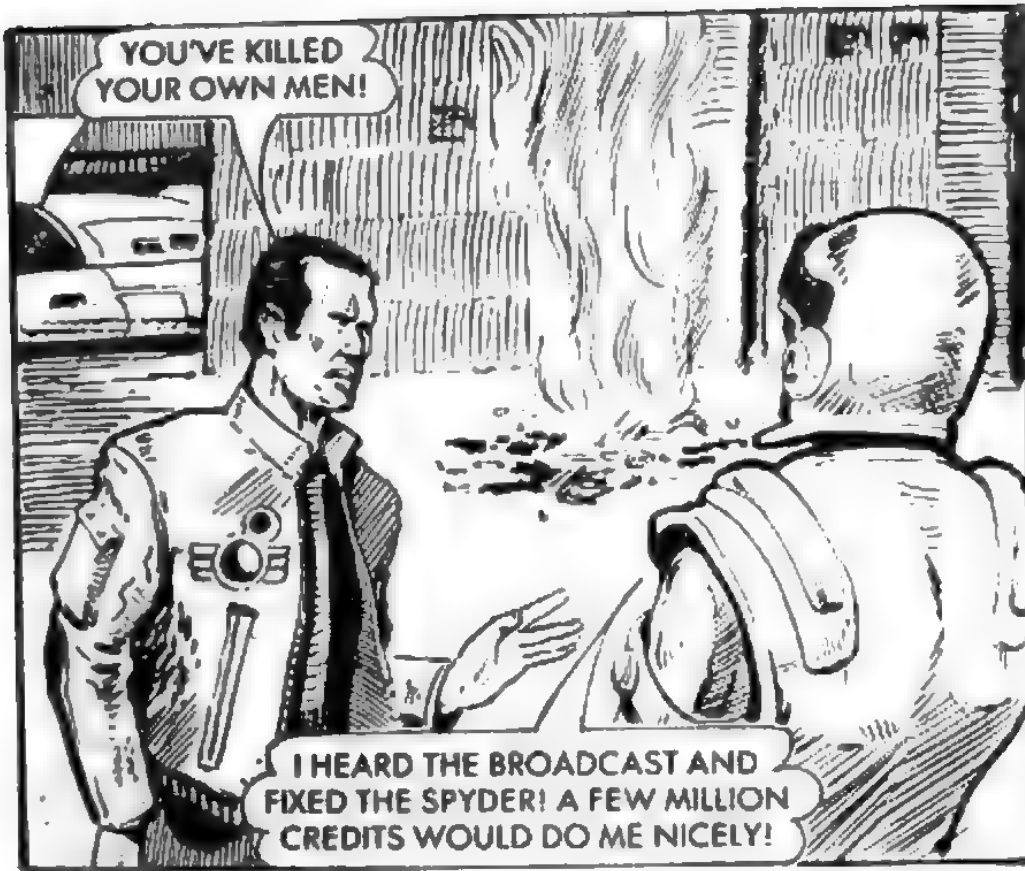
IT'S TOO LATE!

THE SPYDER DETONATED—

AARGH!

A POLICE FLOAT ARRIVED—





THEY FLEW ACROSS THE CITY—



THE POLICEMAN TOOK THEM TO AN UNDERGROUND HANGAR—

HERE THEY
ARE, ZANDOR!

YOU HAVE DONE WELL!
REWARD HIM!

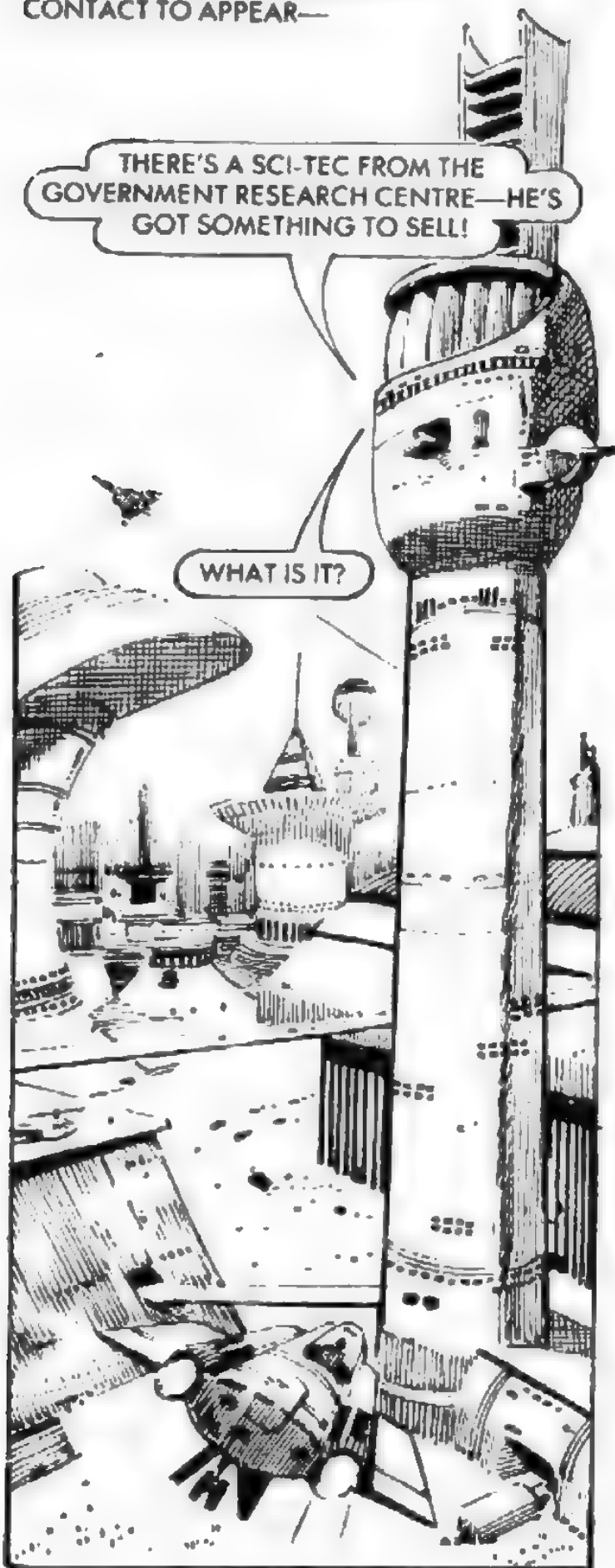




IT TOOK TWO DAYS FOR THE FIRST
CONTACT TO APPEAR—

THERE'S A SCI-TEC FROM THE
GOVERNMENT RESEARCH CENTRE—HE'S
GOT SOMETHING TO SELL!

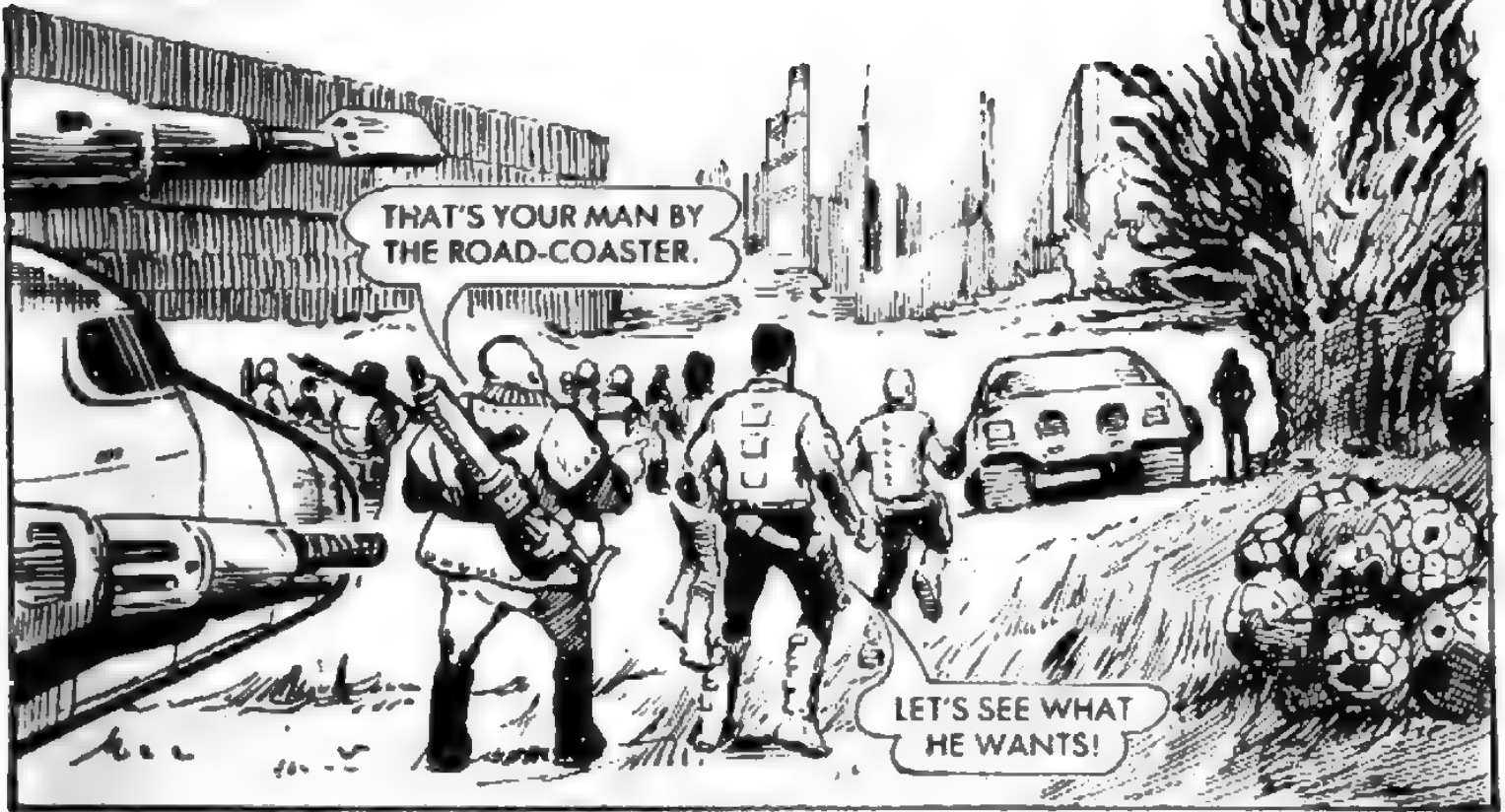
WHAT IS IT?



HE WON'T SAY! WE'VE GOT TO MEET
HIM OUT AT THE CITY LIMITS. I DON'T
THINK IT'S A TRAP, BUT WE'LL TAKE
PRECAUTIONS!



THE RENDEZVOUS WAS MADE—



THE SCARGAN SCI-TEC UNCOVERED A DEVICE.



THE NEXT SECOND A HIGH ENEMY PHASON BOLT BLASTED HIM THROUGH THE AIR—

IT'S A BLIND SPOT . . . ARRGH!

THE LAW!

THEY'RE COMING THIS WAY! LOOKS LIKE
THEY WANT IT BACK!

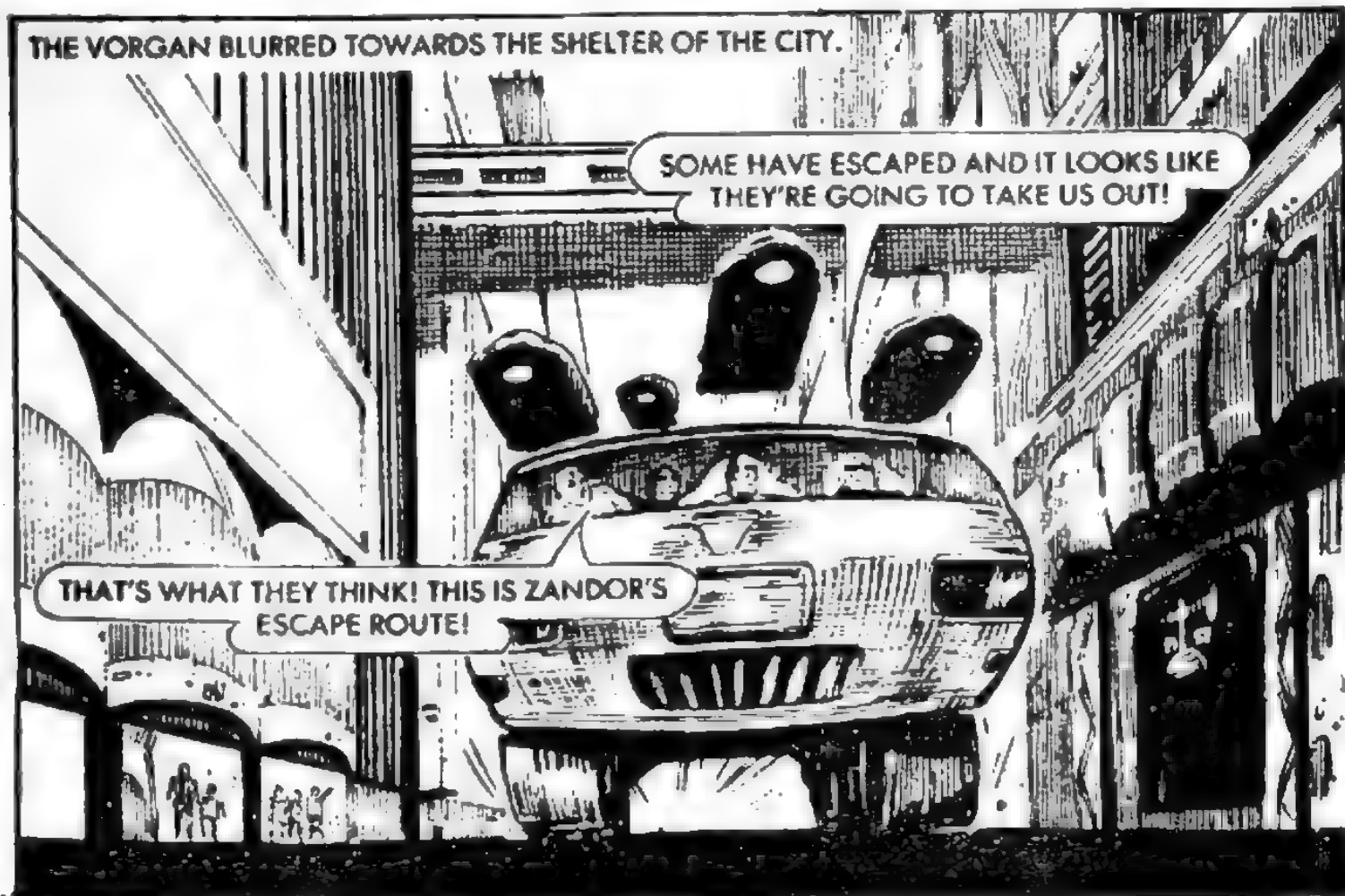
GET IT OUT OF HERE, VORGAN, WHILE WE
HOLD THEM OFF!

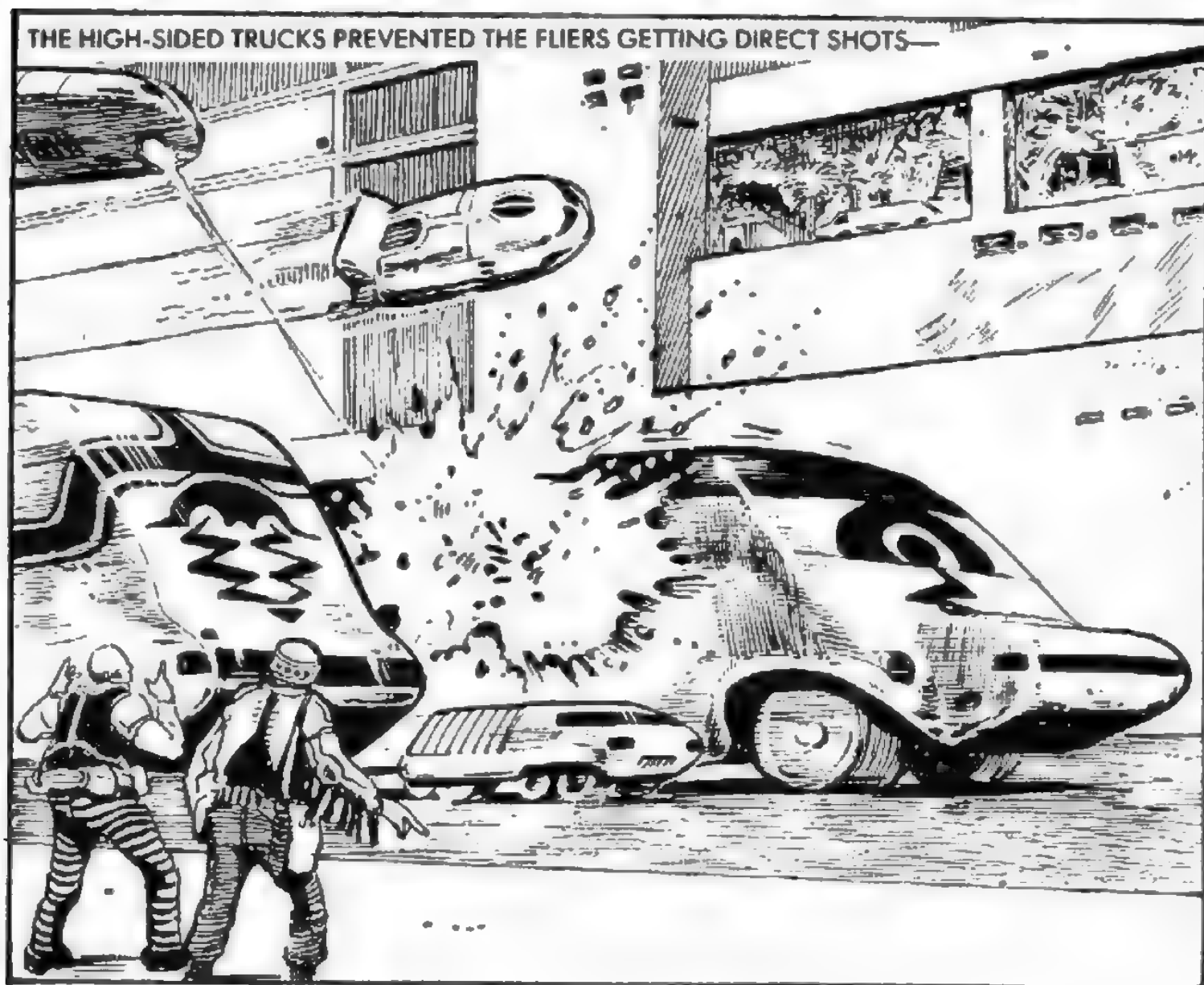


AS THE SPACERS FLED IN THE SCI-TEC'S 'COASTER,
ZANDOR'S MEN BLISTED AT THEIR ATTACKERS—

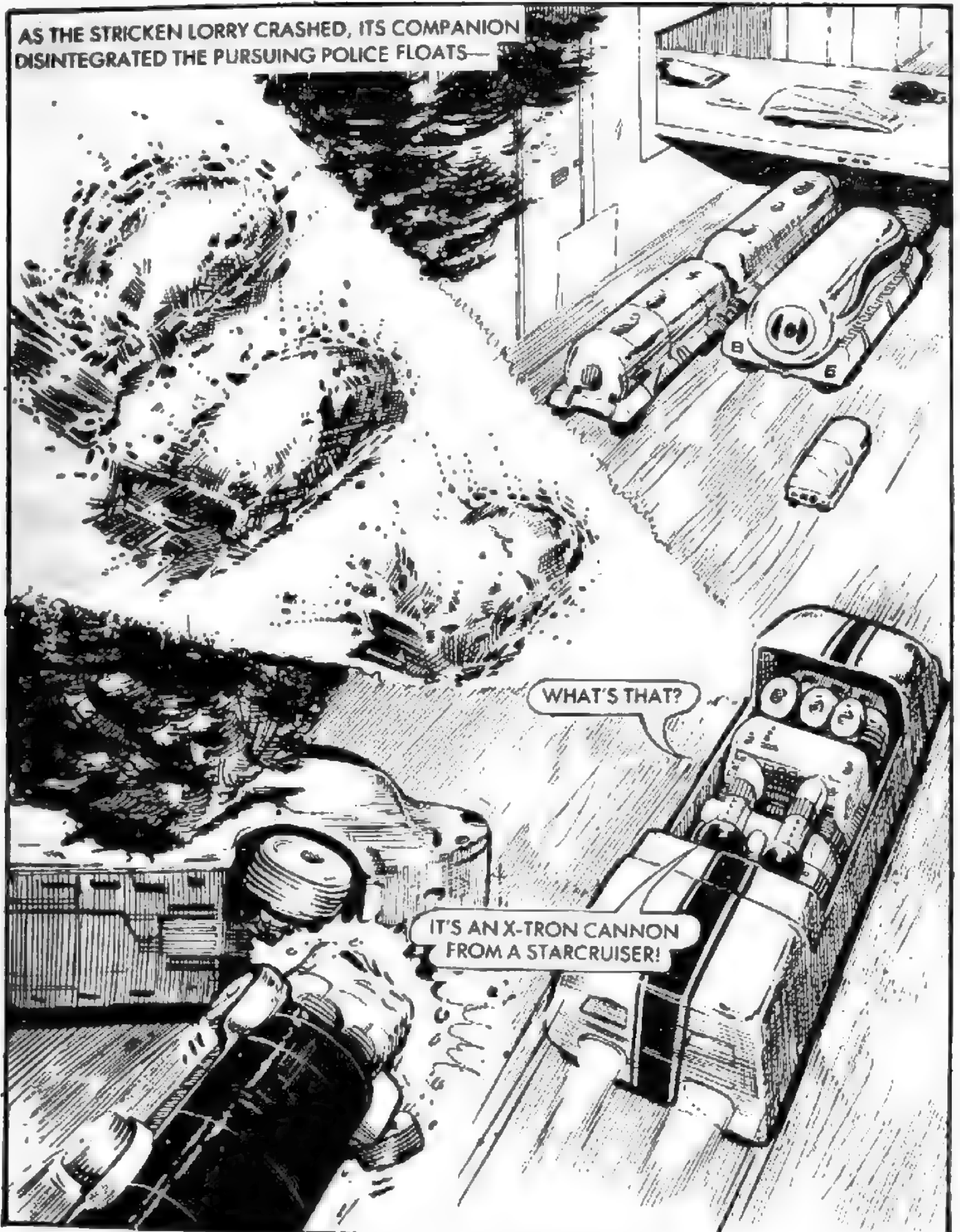


THE VORGAN BLURRED TOWARDS THE SHELTER OF THE CITY.

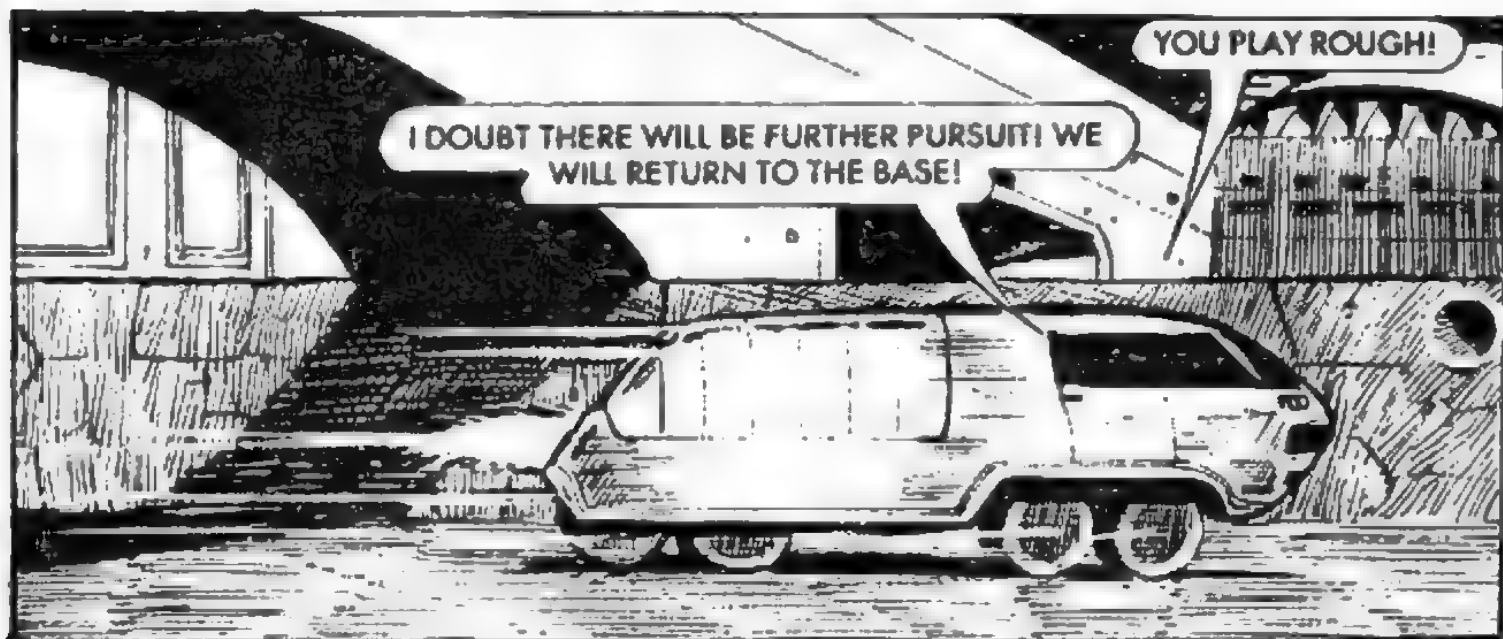




AS THE STRICKEN LORRY CRASHED, ITS COMPANION
DISINTEGRATED THE PURSUING POLICE FLOATS—



BUT THE COLLOSAL POWER OF THE X-TRON CANNON CARRIED ON TO CARVE A SWATHE OF DEVASTATION THROUGH THE CITY—



LATER, SCOTT EXAMINED THE STRANGE DEVICE.

WELL, EARTHMEN, HAVE YOU
DISCOVERED WHAT IT IS?

IT'S A COMPLETE MYSTERY! IT'S NOT A BOMB
AND WHEN WE ACTIVATE IT NOTHING
REGISTERS ON THE SENSOR PROBES!

THE SCI-TEC MUTTERED
SOMETHING ABOUT BLINDSPOT.

BUT IT DOESN'T PRODUCE, OR DO
ANYTHING!

WE'D BETTER DO SOMETHING, BOSS!
THE JUSTICES ARE HERE!

HOW DID THEY
FIND US?

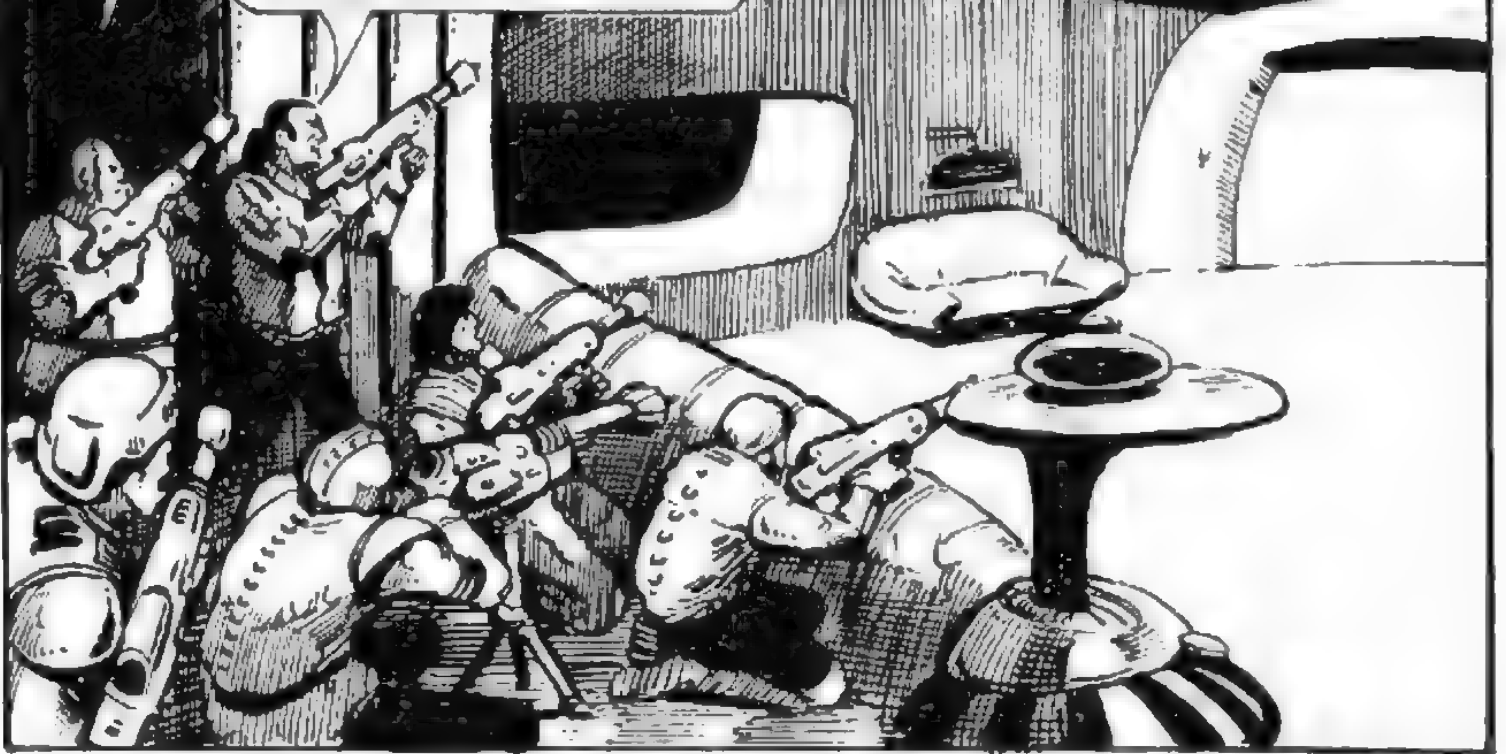
YOUR ACTIVITIES MUST HAVE ALERTED
THEM. IT WOULDN'T TAKE LONG TO
LOCATE POSSIBLE SUSPECTS!

CAN WE GET OUT?

NOT WITH THAT DEVICE—
WE'LL HAVE TO FIGHT THEM!

THEY'LL HAVE TO COME THROUGH THE
ENTRANCE BEHIND US.

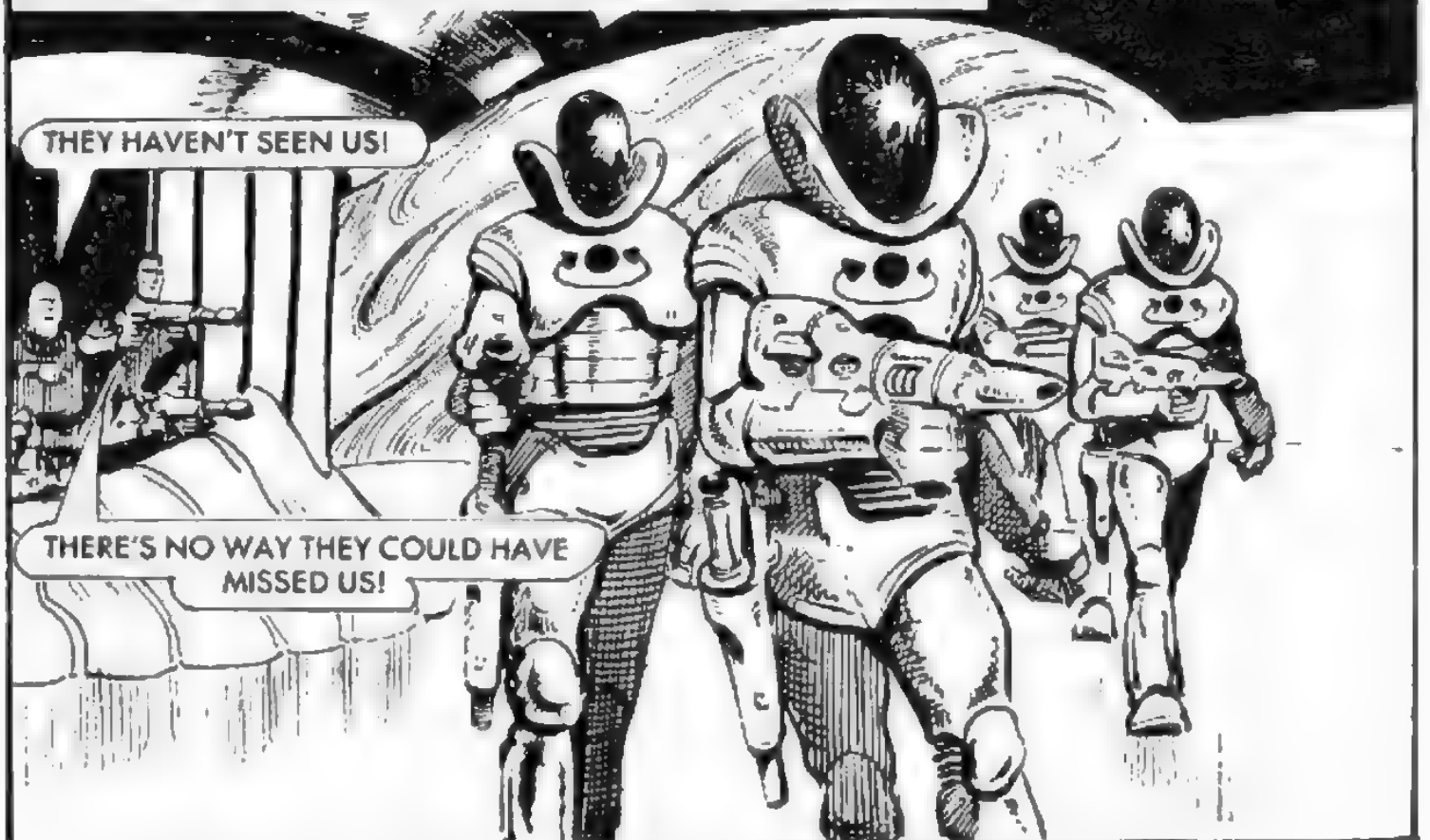
CONCENTRATE FIRE ON THEM!



BUT TO THEIR AMAZEMENT THE JUSTICES TOTALLY IGNORED THEM.

THEY HAVEN'T SEEN US!

THERE'S NO WAY THEY COULD HAVE
MISSED US!



THE JUSTICES LEFT THE BUILDING.

THEY COULDN'T HAVE MISSED
THE DEVICE EITHER!

OF COURSE! THAT'S WHAT IT
DOES! IT CREATES A 'BLINDSPOT'
IN THEIR SENSORS!

SO WHEN THAT'S ON, WE DON'T EXIST!

YES! AND SINCE JUSTICES ARE THE CREATION
OF THE MINDER, THEY MUST SHARE THE
SAME SENSOR SYSTEM! WITH THIS,
SOMEONE COULD GET INSIDE MINDER
WITHOUT IT KNOWING! JUST LIKE THE
SCARGANS!


SCOTT VID-CALLED THE SUPREME COUNCIL WITH HIS SUSPICIONS.

YOUR CLAIMS ARE PREPOSTEROUS,
EARTHMAN SCOTT!

THEN ASK THE SCARGAN COUNCILLORS
WHY THEY ORDERED THEIR POLICE TO
KILL US!



THEY'RE GOING TO THE MINDER! YOU
MUST STOP THEM!



WE CAN'T! WE HAVE NO PROOF OF THEIR
CONNECTION WITH ANY PLOT! YOU AND YOUR ALLIES
ARE WANTED FOR ALL THE CITY DEATHS! IN ANY CASE
THE MINDER'S DEFENCES CAN HANDLE ANY
PROBLEMS!



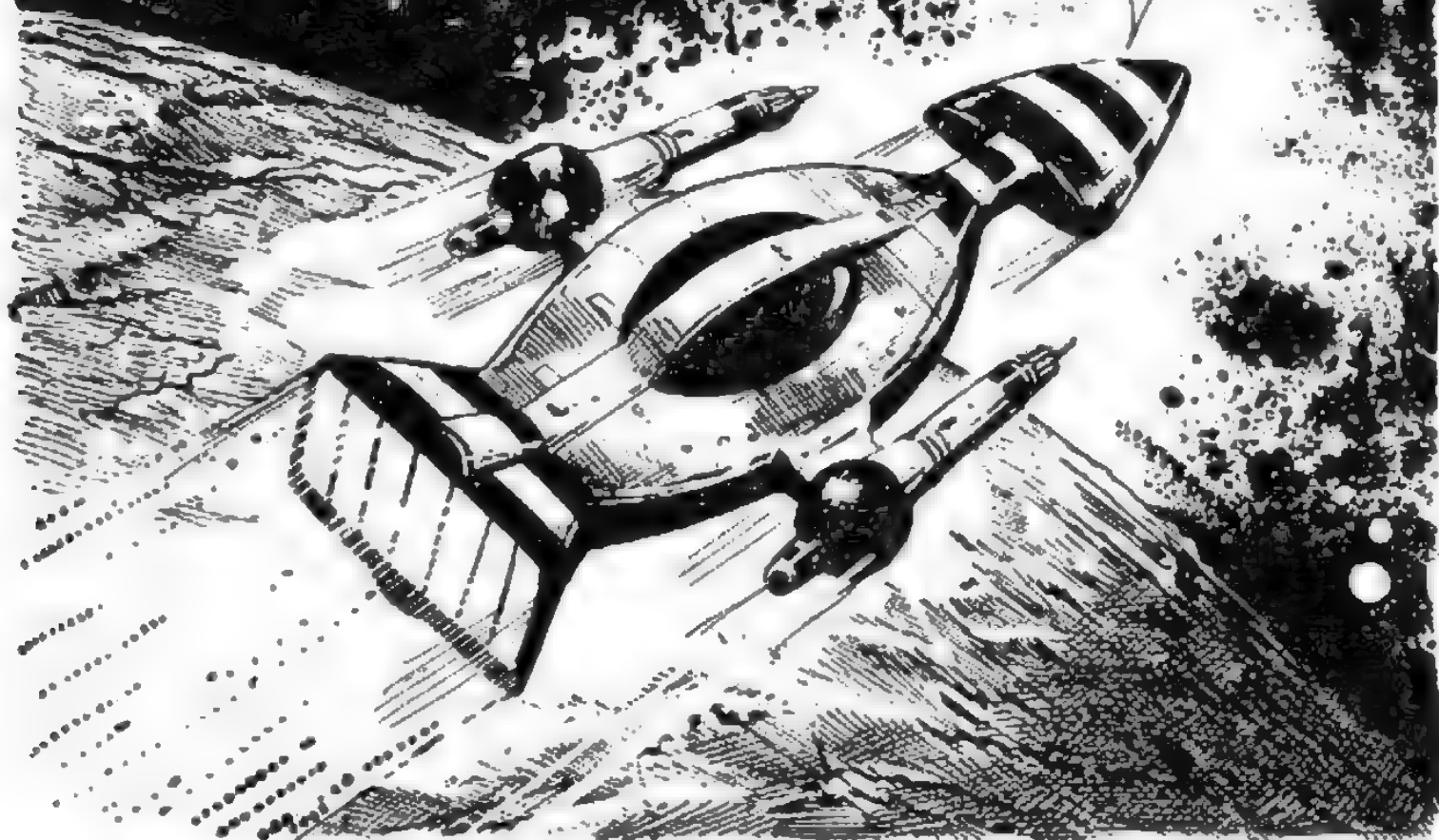
FOOLS! THEY ARE GOING TO MINDER FOR A
PURPOSE! IF I COULD GET TO MY SHIP I'D FOLLOW
THEM!



THE POLICE VAPED YOUR VESSEL, SCOTT,
BUT I HAVE A FAST SHIP YOU CAN USE!

THE VORGAN LOADED THE DEVICE AND THEY BLASTED FOR SPACE.

SET THE CO-ORDINATES FOR THE MINDER!

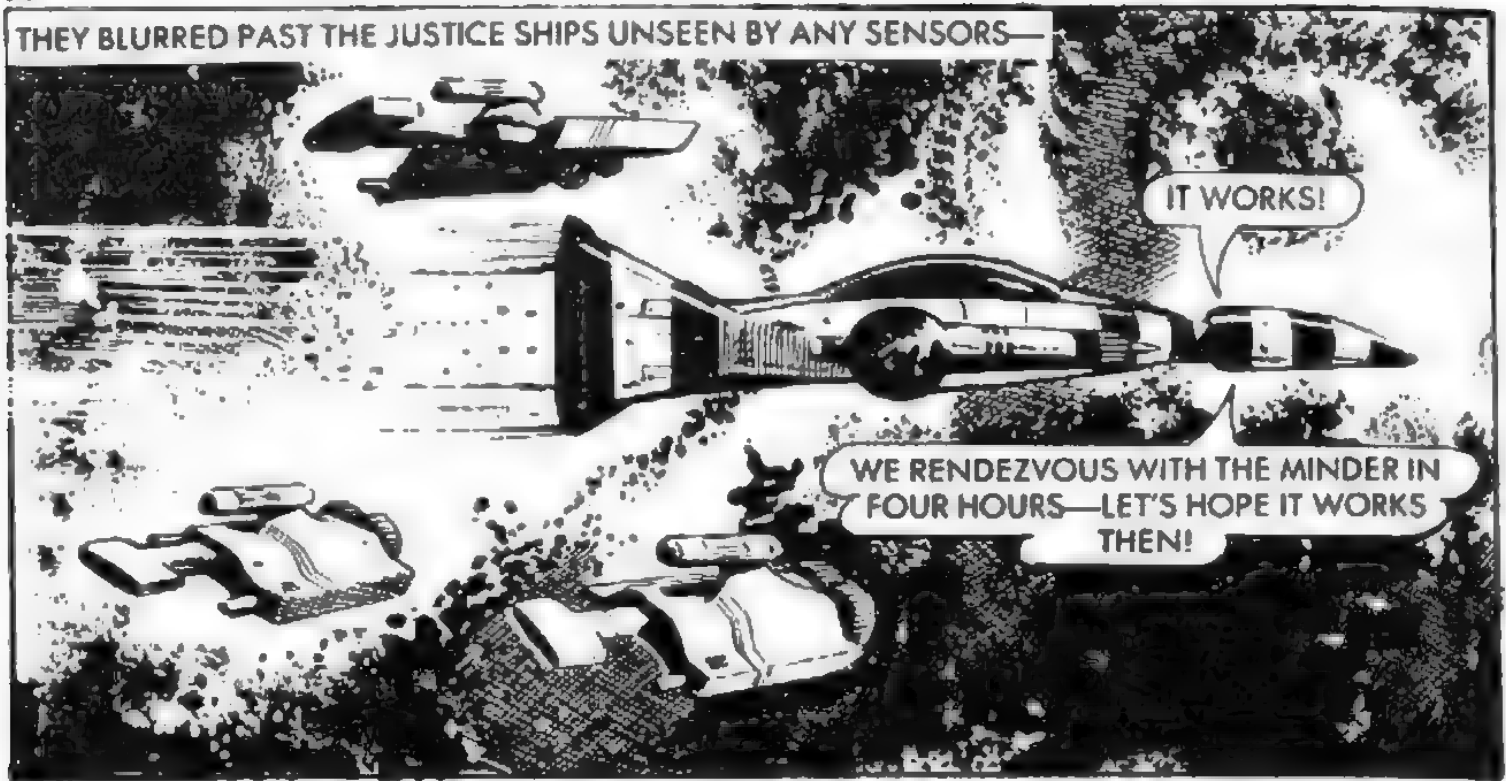


JUSTICE SHIPS APPROACHING —
ACTIVATE DEVICE!

IT'S ON!



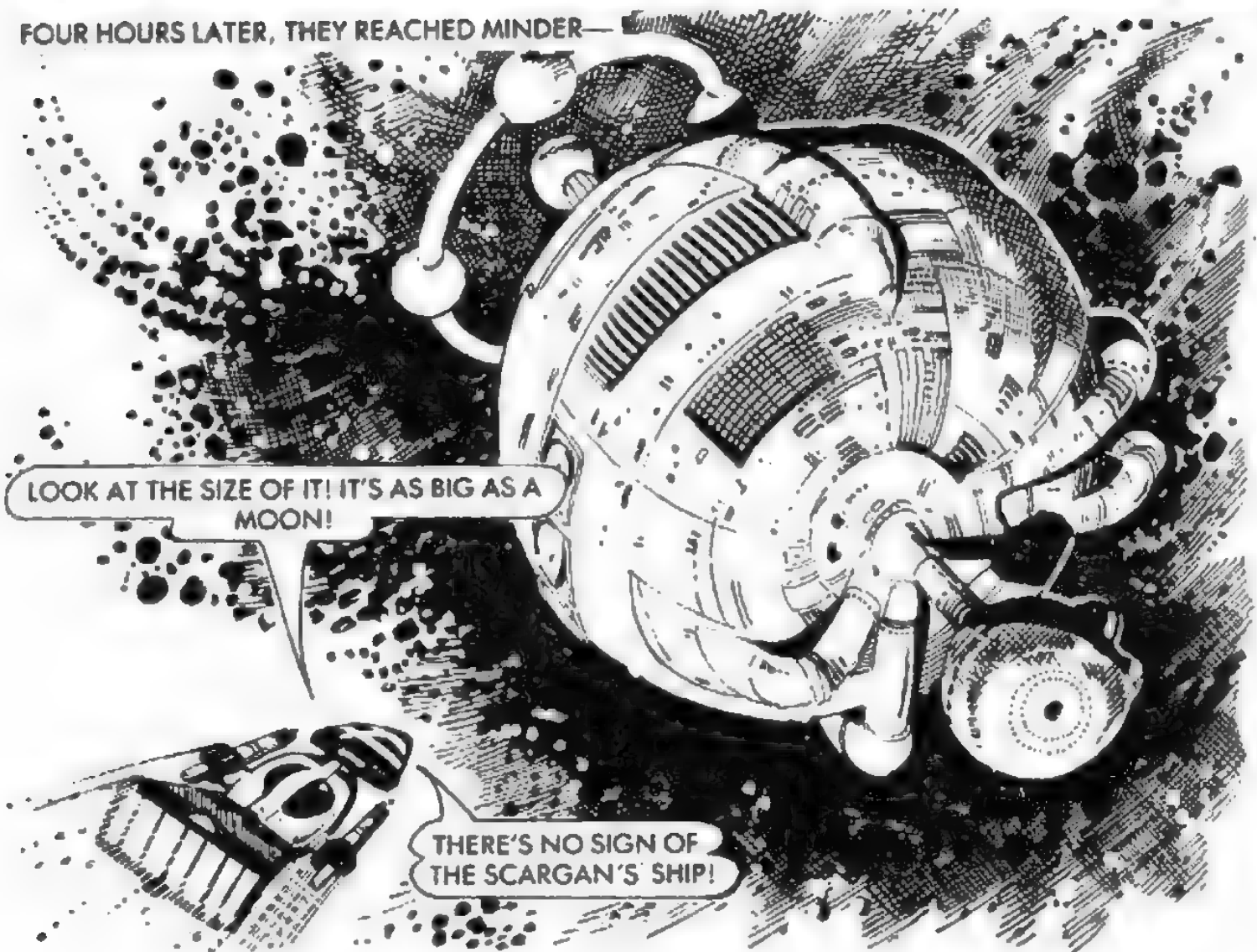
THEY BLURRED PAST THE JUSTICE SHIPS UNSEEN BY ANY SENSORS—



IT WORKS!

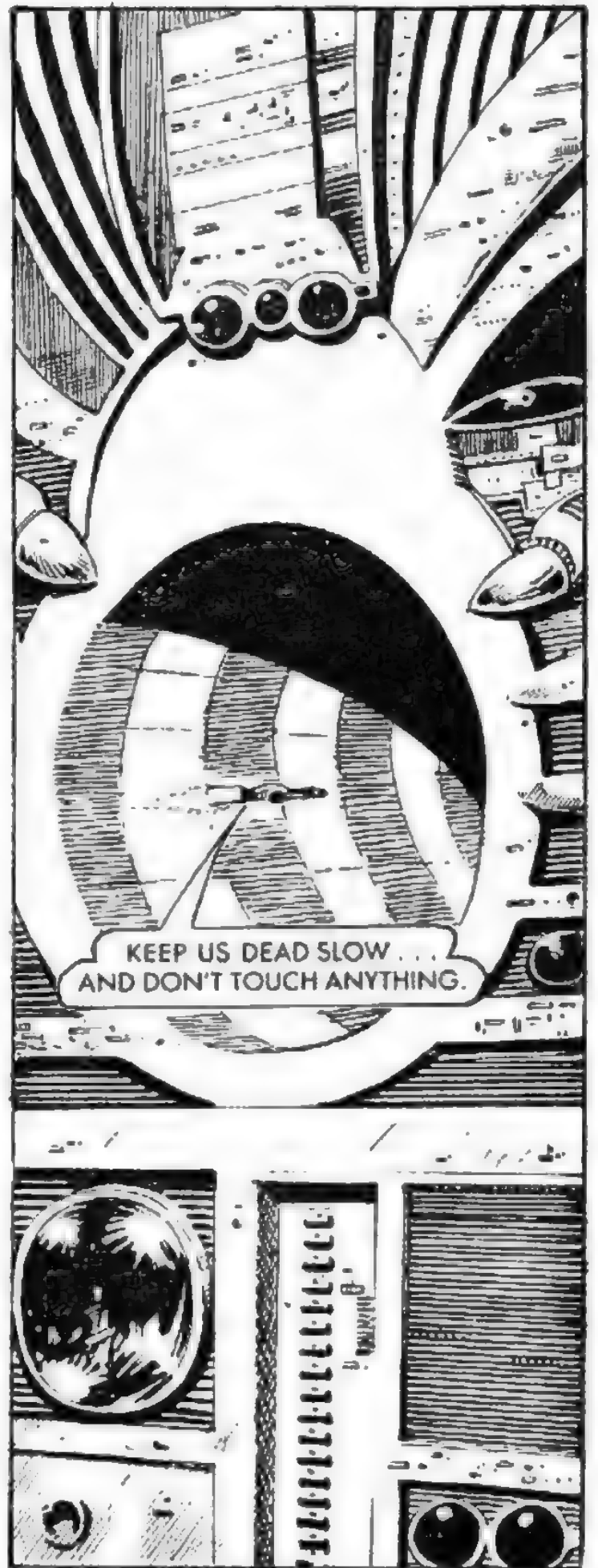
WE RENDEZVOUS WITH THE MINDER IN
FOUR HOURS—LET'S HOPE IT WORKS
THEN!

FOUR HOURS LATER, THEY REACHED MINDER—



LOOK AT THE SIZE OF IT! IT'S AS BIG AS A
MOON!

THERE'S NO SIGN OF
THE SCARGAN'S SHIP!



THE SHIP FLEW DEEP INSIDE THE MINDER THROUGH A SYSTEM OF VAST TUNNELS. AROUND THEM THE WALLS PULSED AND VIBRATED.



THIS IS LIKE FLYING DOWN SOMEONE'S INNARDS!

YEAH! IT'S AN ARTIFICIAL BRAIN! INSIDE IT'S NEARLY ALL BIO-MASS—AND IT BUILT MOST OF THIS ITSELF.

HOURS LATER THEY FOUND THE SCARGAN SHIP.

WE'RE IN A DEAD END AND THERE'S NO
SIGN OF ACTIVITY ON THEIR SHIP!

THEY MUST HAVE ALL GONE
DOWN THAT SIDE TUNNEL!



WE'LL HAVE TO GO AFTER THEM! HAVE
YOU GOT SOME TRANSPORT WE CAN
CARRY THE BLINDER ON?

I'M SORRY, BUT...



... THIS IS AS FAR AS WE GO! THIS SHIP IS A BOMB! I'VE LIVED ONLY TO DESTROY THE MINDER AND AVENGE THE EXTERMINATION OF MY RACE!



SCOTT HURLED HIMSELF AT THE HATE-CRAZED VORGAN.

YOU'RE EXTERMINATING NO ONE!

SCOTT! THE BLINDER!



THEY STARED IN DISMAY AT THE SHATTERED 'BLINDER' DEVICE AS A GREAT VOICE FILLED THE SHIP.

HOW DID YOU GET IN HERE?
TELL ME AT ONCE OR YOU DIE NOW!

LET ME COME OUTSIDE AND TALK TO YOU,
MINDER! YOU ARE IN GREAT DANGER!

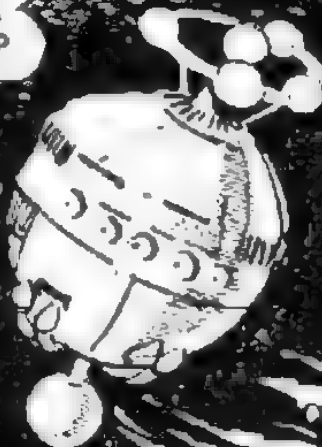


SCOTT FLOATED IN AN OXY-ATMOSPHERE AS THE
MINDER CREATED A MORE ACCEPTABLE METHOD
OF COMMUNICATION. EXPLANATION WAS
RAPID.

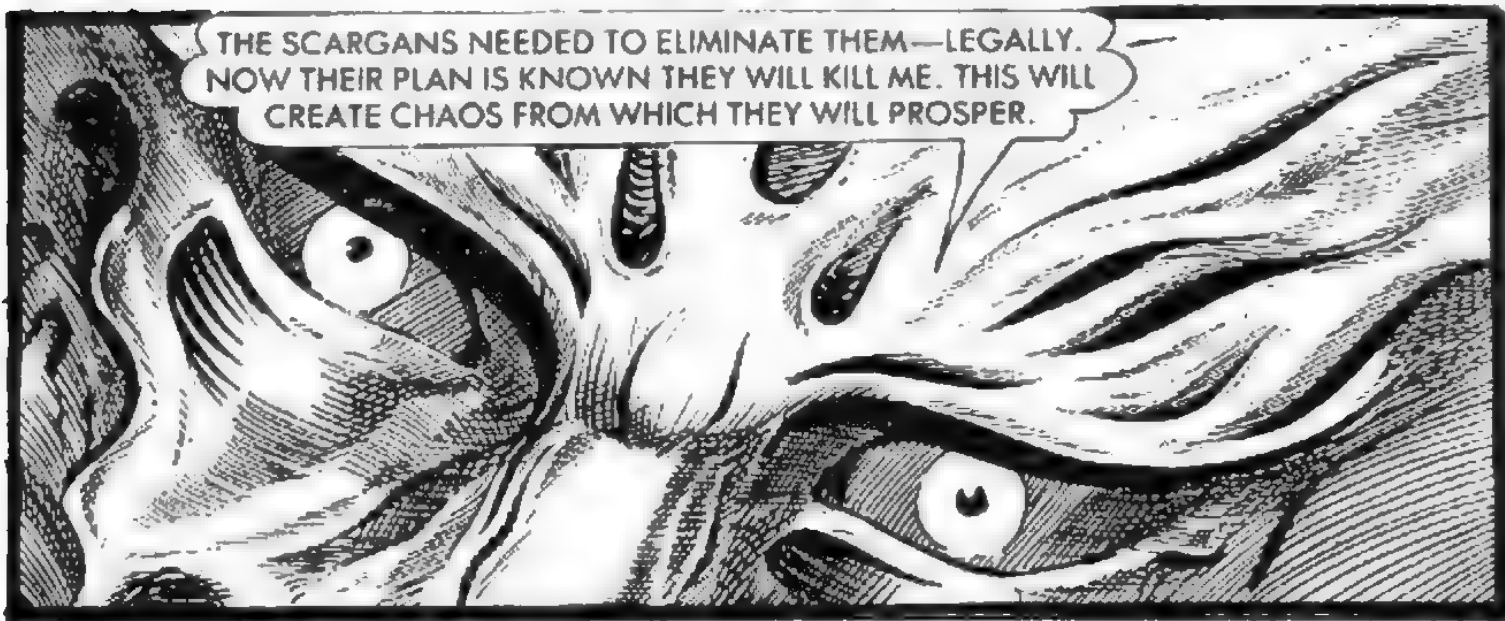


YOU TELL THE TRUTH. THE SCARGANS MUST
HAVE SOME CONTROL OVER ME. THEY HAVE
USED ME TO CREATE THE PLAGUE AND
BLOCKED MY ATTEMPTS TO PRODUCE A CURE.

THEIR AMBITION IS THE TOTAL DOMINATION OF THE SPIRAL SYSTEM THROUGH CONTROL OF ME. HOWEVER, THEY WILL NEED FIFTY MORE YEARS TO DO THIS, FOR I AM VAST! EARTH AND VORGA WERE AMONG THE FEW PLANETS TO KEEP THEIR WAR-FLEETS.



THE SCARGANS NEEDED TO ELIMINATE THEM—LEGALLY. NOW THEIR PLAN IS KNOWN THEY WILL KILL ME. THIS WILL CREATE CHAOS FROM WHICH THEY WILL PROSPER.



I AM POWERLESS TO PREVENT THIS, YOU MUST DO IT FOR ME.

THAT'S WHAT WE CAME FOR, MINDER!



SCOTT ENTERED THE SHIP TO FIND THE VORGAN DRAINED OF HIS HATE.

IT SEEMS THAT I GOT IT ALL WRONG,
SCOTT. I WANT TO HELP!

WHAT ABOUT DIGGING US OUT SOME
TRANSPORT! THERE'S A LOT TO DO AND
NOT MUCH TIME!

THE JORGAN FOUND A TRANSPORTER —

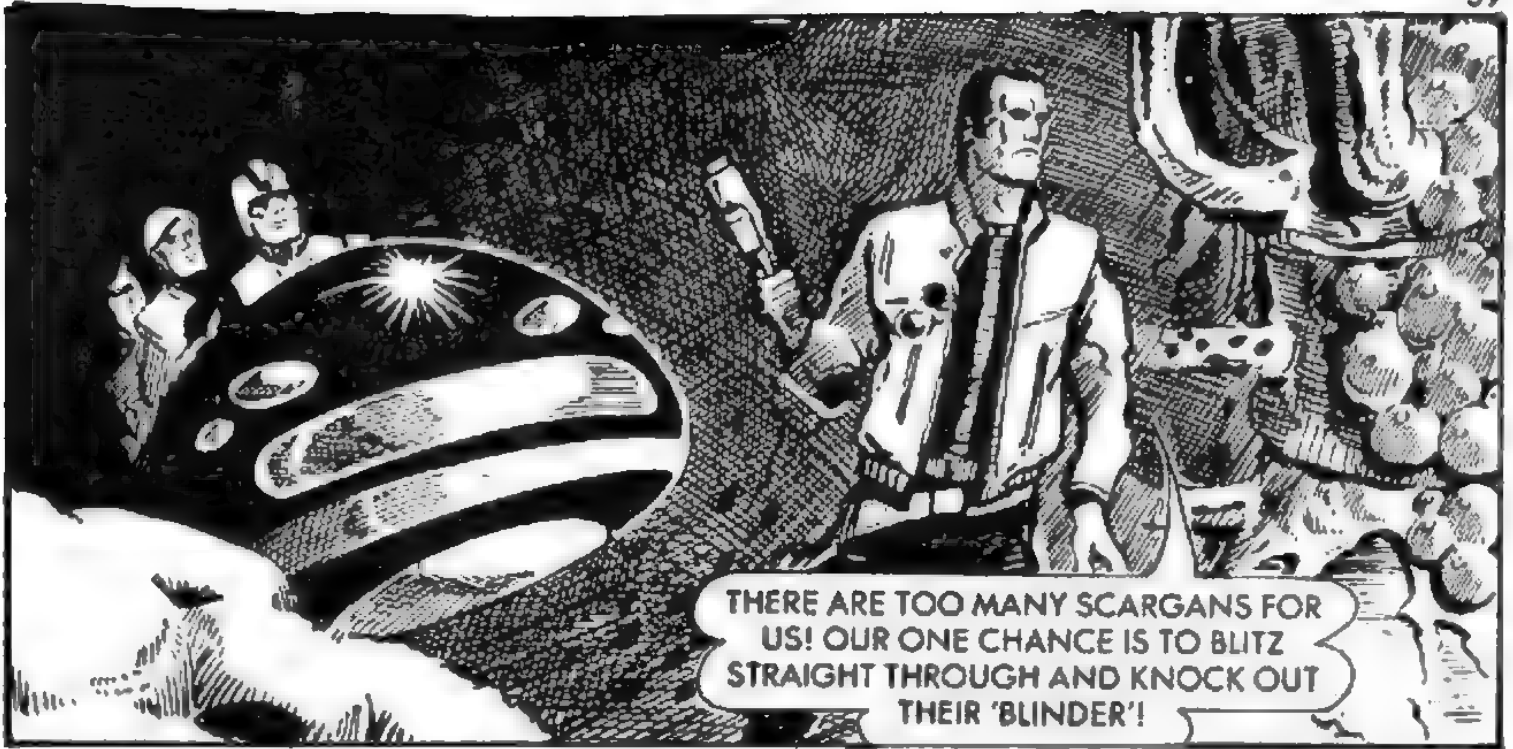
I DEDUCE THY YOU WILL FIND THE
INTRUDERS INSIDE MY CENTRAL CORTEX. I
WILL DIRECT YOU UNTIL I AM 'BLINDED'.

MINDER'S VOICE DIED AS THEY SIGHTED A CHAMBER AHEAD OF THEM.



LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE SYNCHRONISING A LINK OF BOMBS!





THEY RACED INTO THE CHAMBER BLASTING A PATH THROUGH THEIR STARTLED ENEMY—



THE TRANSTORP EXPLODED—



SCOTT LANDED ON HIS FEET—





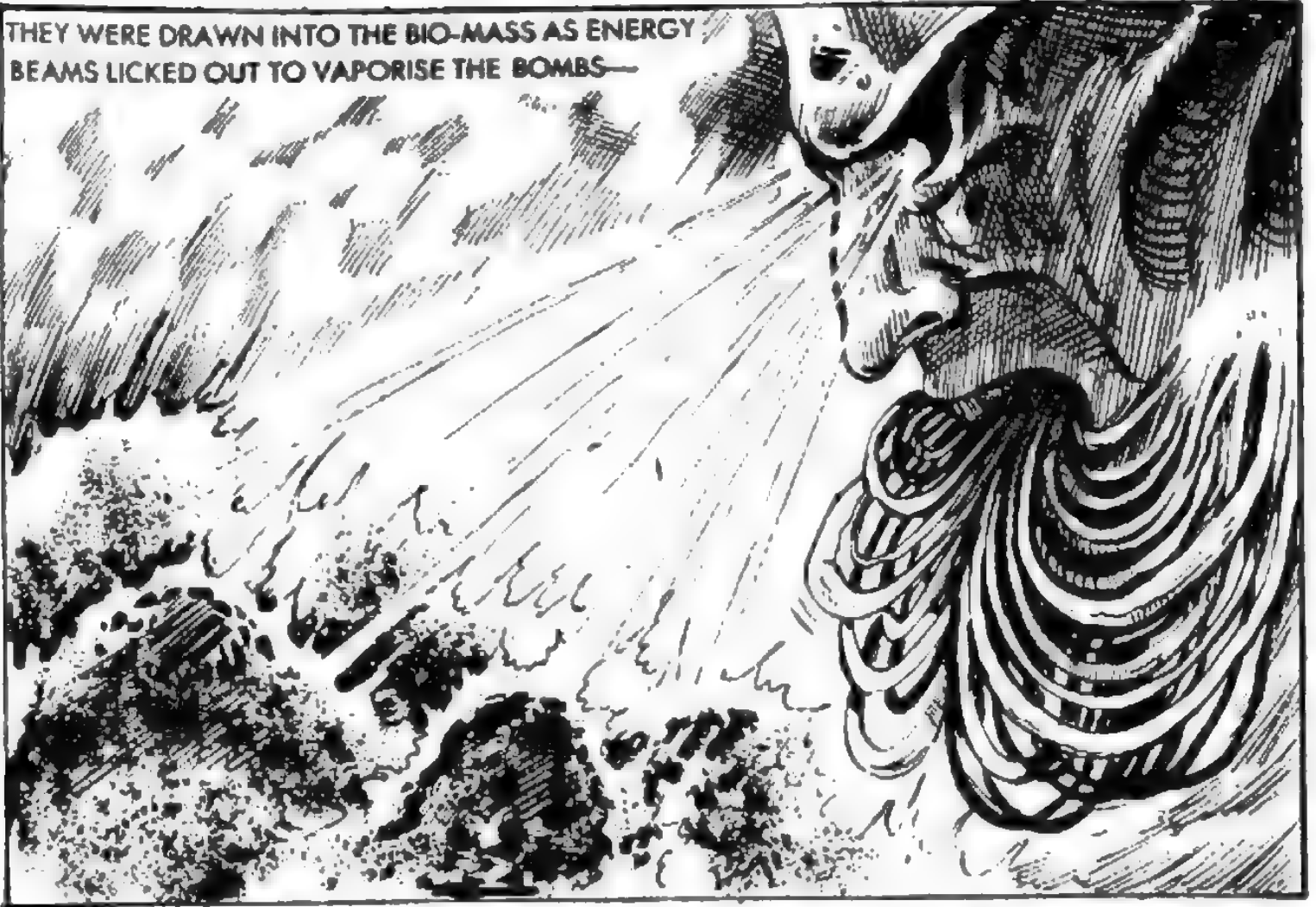
ALL WEAPONS DIED AS MINDER INSTANTLY 'SAW' AND REACTED—



ITS BIO-MASS FORMED INTO SNAKE-LIKE ARMS THAT
REACHED OUT TO GRAB THE SCREAMING SCARGANS—



THEY WERE DRAWN INTO THE BIO-MASS AS ENERGY
BEAMS LICKED OUT TO VAPORISE THE BOMBS—



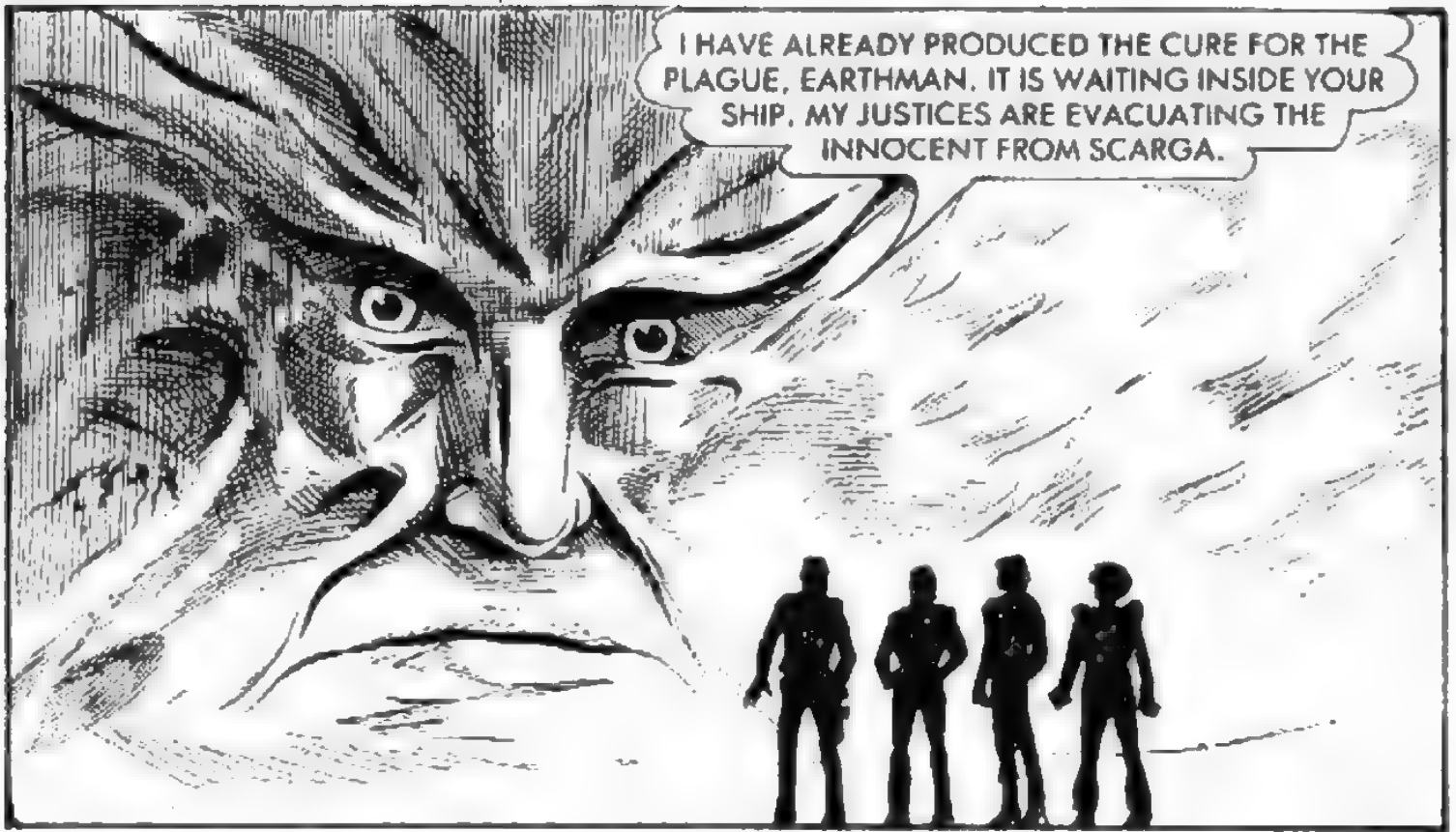
AT LAST ONLY SCOTT AND HIS BRUISED COMPANIONS REMAINED.

IT'S OVER!

NOT QUITE! OUR PEOPLE
STILL HAVE THE PLAGUE!

AND SCARGA MUST
BE PUNISHED!





A SHORT TIME LATER THE SPACER'S SHIP LEFT FROM THE MINDER.

HIT THAT WARP BUTTON AND LET'S GO HOME.

HEY, MINDER'S COMING ON SCREEN!

I HAVE MADE MISTAKES. IT IS WRONG FOR FREE
PEOPLES TO BE GOVERNED BY ANOTHER. WHEN I HAVE
LET THE PLANETS REORGANISE THEMSELVES I WILL
ENSURE THEIR FREEDOMS.



A YEAR LATER SCOTT WENT WITH A GROUP OF OBSERVERS TO WATCH AS THE MINDER AND ITS JUSTICES SELF-DESTRUCTED—

FAREWELL, FRIEND . . .

FAREWELL, MINDER!

ARMED WITH DETAILED INFORMATION ON EVERY PLANET, THE NEW WORLD COUNCIL COULD MAKE SURE NO SINGLE PLANET COULD EVER THREATEN PEACE AGAIN.

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GUIDE TO THE SPACEMEN

Early in 1977, on February 7, second time cosmonaut, Gorbatko, and Lieutenant Colonel Yuri Glaskov successfully docked Soyuz 24 with Salyut 5. For 17 days 16 hours 8 minutes they remained aloft.